

**Maesteg gets a boost as swimming pool cash is found**  
£600,000 for Llynfi Valley  
(SEE PAGE 16)

## Bridgend & Porthcawl

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THURSDAY, JANUARY 28TH, 2010

## 'I FEEL LIKE HALF OF ME DIED...'

– murdered twin's sister

**THE identical twin sister of a young woman murdered by an obsessed older man watched him being jailed for life at Cardiff Crown Court on Tuesday – and said: "Half of me has died with her."**

Twin Nicola Thomas told of her emotional torment at jealous Philip Packer (30) strangling her sister Jenna (22) because she had found a new boyfriend her own age.

Former lover Packer was jailed after being found guilty of murdering Jenna in his car in a country lane.

Her twin sister Nicola made a moving statement which was read to the court, as Packer sat with his head bowed in the dock.

Nicola said: "People don't understand how great the bond between twins can be – not even other family members."

"It has been seven months since my sister died, and I still feel like half of me died that day, too."

"People still call me by her name, and I know my mum and dad find it hard when I walk through the front door. For a split second, I know they see her."

"I not only lost my sister and best friend, but part of me, too."

"Our whole family lost a precious girl and no words come near to explaining the impact this has had on us."

Nicola revealed she hid herself away upstairs after Jenna's death, to avoid adding to her family's grief.

She said: "At times, I would be sat on my own

wanting to go downstairs, but if I did, it would make it hard for everyone else."

"I felt a complete sense of loss and the irony is that the one person I would want to turn to is the one person who isn't there."

"Even after feelings of loss have faded and I find myself having fun and feeling life is bearable, those feelings quickly tend to go. I still feel like I shouldn't have too much fun, because Jenna isn't here with me."

"No parent ever expects their child to die before them and it makes me both angry and upset that my mum and dad have been put in this position."

"We have all come to realise this pain will never go. Despite our best efforts, normality is still unachievable."

(Continued on page 13)

## BAND D TAX SET TO RISE BY £48?

**COUNCIL TAX in Bridgend is set to rise by £48 a year at Band D – an increase of just under 5 per cent.**

Bridgend's cabinet approved the new rate at its meeting on Tuesday, although it also has to be agreed by the full council.

This will push the

Band D council tax up to £1,057.

Lower bands will pay a lower increase, while higher bands will pay more; but town and community council precepts also have to be added to that figure, as well as the South Wales Police precept, to give householders the grand total of what they will have to find in the new financial

year starting in April.

The council has set itself a new budget of £232m – up from the £223m being spent in the current year.

However, despite the increase, the council is having to find savings across the board, as it is facing massive pressures which will wipe out that increase and more.

(Continued on page 13)

## THE Christmas lights in Porthcawl were a huge disappointment – according to town councillors.

Coun Norah Clarke told members that she felt that the town council had let the residents down because the lights were very poor.

"I did a recce on December 29 just down John Street and only eight of the 20 units were working. That's appalling."

Council leader David Deere also felt that people had been let down.

"We need for Lumalite, who were the contractors appointed, to come and tell us what went wrong. We also need a representative of Bridgend County Borough Council (BCBC) because at the moment, we have them blaming the company and vice-versa."

"I do not think that the council should make any

further payments until we are satisfied."

He reported that he and the new clerk had been looking through the contracts and documentation.

Clerk Alison Leyshon said she had looked through the agreement, and that it did not specify where the lights were to go: "There was no mention of Newton or Nottage."

Ms Leyshon also pointed out that there were no minutes from the working group, which was the committee that made all the decisions about Christmas lighting.

She added that the firm had asked why it should attend the meeting when the problems that took place were not their fault.

However, Coun John Bunker said that there were issues: "The lights

## REPORT by JAYNE ISAAC

that they installed, which they said were substantial enough to withstand gales, all fell down with the first lot of wind. They were not fit for purpose."

Coun Alana Davies agreed that the council had let the people of Porthcawl down: "We took a backward step, having had solar-powered lights in 2007, to decide not to have them the following year."

"Although they were not Blackpool Illuminations, they gave us UK-wide publicity. We must reconsider it in future."

Coun Jill Sweet said that the tree placed by the police station was pathetic.

Coun Norah Clarke stated that it was unclear what information about

the lights was conveyed to the working group: "Did the people on this group know about the solar lights? There has been a breakdown in communication."

Coun Alana Davies commented that she had raised this repeatedly throughout 2008. The facts were known to members of the working group and to councillors generally.

Coun Chris Smart said that the lights were a nightmare and a special meeting of the council should take place to discuss this.

"A substantial part of our budget is spent on these lights. We must have a visit from the firm responsible."

Coun Alana Davies said that from now on, proper minutes of meetings of the working group must be kept and

recorded. Coun Wendy Ingram explained that minutes were taken, but she had them all at home and will produce them at the next meeting.

Mayor Rosemary Deere remarked that the protocols governing the working group need to be looked at and their decisions should be reported back to the council.

"We are thoroughly disgruntled and apologise to the public. We will try to do better this coming Christmas."

● A meeting has been set up with Lumalite and with Clive Blackshaw of Bridgend's highways department to discuss what happened to the lights.

This takes place tonight (Thursday).

The council sets aside £16,000 in its annual budget to pay for decorative lighting.

## Bridgend assault: three are held

**BRIDGEND police are appealing for information after an incident in the Heol Ty Maen area in the early hours of January 22, when three males forced their way into a house and assaulted a 48-year-old male occupier.**

He was taken to the Princess of Wales hospital where his injuries were described as not life threatening.

Police stated that three people were arrested in connection with the incident: a 20-year-old man from Porthcawl, and two 17-year-old youths, one from Porthcawl and the other from Bridgend.

Anyone with information, is asked to contact Detective Sergeant Paul Mason at Bridgend CID on 01656 679 518, or Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.



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## Hospital's cuts down to merger?

**REFER** to last week's article in The GEM regarding the cancellation of operations at the Princess of Wales Hospital Bridgend.

It must also be a concern that the "Bridgend area now has 200 fewer beds than it did in 1985".

One wonders whether this dramatic reduction has anything to do with the enforced merger of the old Bro Morgannwg NHS Trust with Swansea to form the ABM Hospital Trust, which has resulted in a £30m black hole in the trust's finances.

There must be concern that surgery is being curtailed at the

POW Bridgend and being transferred to the Swansea hospitals in order to save money.

Making sure that health service demands are met in Bridgend does not mean denying them to the people of Swansea. Good health care should be provided across the board area.

Hospital managers are not to blame - they have to work within the restrictions imposed on them. The fault lies with the Welsh Assembly Government which imposed this under-funded and ill-thought out merger on the area.

Unfortunately, it is the ill and injured who suffer yet again. **Helen Baker** (Conservatory parliamentary candidate for Bridgend)

## PAWS for thought of the animals...

**CHRISTMAS** may be gone, but it is not forgotten as far as PAWS' furry friends are concerned, thanks to the generosity of the local community!

Porthcawl Animal Welfare Society is pleased to report that a number of initiatives held over the festive season generated some much-needed funds for the charity.

The sum of £180 was raised from our two Christmas trees of remembrance, which were festooned with stars purchased by people in fond memory of their favourite pets;

while avid swimmer Helga Collier braved the Bristol Channel for the annual Porthcawl Swim, raising £400.

The proceeds from both were used towards feeding, vaccinating, spaying/neutering and micro-chipping just some of the many cats and dogs we rescued in December.

Funding for the charity is an ongoing challenge and PAWS would like to thank the local community for their invaluable support.

It was heartening to know that the needy cats and dogs were remembered at the end of a difficult year for many! **Alexis Kirsten** (for the PAWS volunteers)

## Trust's free energy check

**THE Energy Saving Trust is working in partnership with Bridgend County Borough Council to offer local households a free personalised home energy check - to help reduce energy bills.**

"The home energy check questionnaire is being sent to households in the Bridgend area, and will provide householders with a free, personalised home energy report which can help save around £300\* per year," a spokeswoman stated.

The report will pro-

vide householders with free advice on how they can be better efficient in their home.

It will also give practical advice on how to save energy, improve a home's rating and at the same time lower fuel bills.

For those who don't receive a questionnaire, or who prefer instant results, the home energy check can be completed online at: [HYPERLINK http://www.energysavingtrust.org.uk/check-rg.uk/check](http://www.energysavingtrust.org.uk/check-rg.uk/check)

For further information, speak to an Energy Saving Trust advisor on 0800 512 012.

## THE COLUMN YOU WRITE

### Readers' Letters

We reserve the right to edit all letters. We do NOT accept anonymous mail. Letters and emails MUST include full address and a contact telephone number. An email address alone is not sufficient. We will (in certain circumstances), protect a writer's identity, if requested. Please keep your letters brief and address them to: The Editor, Glamorgan GEM Ltd, Graig House, 53 Eastgate, Cowbridge CF71 7EL.

## 'ROUNDABOUTS: 'WHY THIS SILENCE FROM THE BOROUGH COUNCIL?'

**FURTHER** to my article in The GEM dated December 31 concerning the traffic lights at Waterton and Ewenny and possibly new ones being installed at Broadlands, I have been pleased to see many supporting letters for my idea to demolish the lights at Waterton and Ewenny and leave Broadlands as it is.

However, I notice that the response from the council has been deafen-

ingly silent. Is that perhaps because they agree with the proposal, but are too embarrassed to admit that their former policy has been wrong and a complete waste of our money - furthering the narrow view of the main proponents of this strategy?

More likely, I think, is that they have a policy of ignoring adverse comments and hope that any campaign such as this will fizzle out and get lost in the long grass.

No doubt the council department concerned has a computer model which will refute that traffic has flowed more freely and smoothly.

## Changes needed to make roads safer for cyclists

**I WISH** to respond to the follow-up letter by Dr RP Sheppard, regarding the issue of cyclists/pedestrians using the B4270 Llantwit Major to Llandow road.

It appears that Dr Sheppard will never accept any ideas that I have put forward, which I must emphasise again, are not pure suggestion but born out of 20plus years of experience on my part. He thankfully agreed with one of my points, but denounced the rest, saying they were impractical.

Rather than doing this, I would appreciate him making some constructive ideas of his own, as like him I would like to see safer roads for cyclists and pedestrians.

I will not suggest any further ideas, as he will no doubt find fault with them.

In these days of busy roads, the cyclist/pedestrian is in the minority

and is always going to have a hard time, unless this country's attitude to transport changes.

Unless local transport improves or designated cycle routes are implemented, this imbalance will always exist.

It's up to the said road users to make their journeys as safe as practical and reduce the risks. A recent example that I must bring to your attention of someone with no regard for his own safety, was a gentleman I saw recently on the road in question, who was walking (thankfully facing the oncoming traffic) towards Llantwit Major as it was getting dark, wearing camouflage trousers and jacket.

He was not only risking his own life, but presenting a road safety hazard, as traffic was swerving to avoid him, due to not being able to see him early enough!

I have not seen him on this road since; hopefully he didn't come to any harm.

**PJ Alexander, Brackla**

However, I doubt whether such a model, like most that try to simulate complex situations, would contain all the parameters.

In any case, such a model would be designed to prove the need for traffic lights and might well be supplied by an organisation with a vested interest in showing that need.

Just from observing traffic flows at different times, it should be intuitively obvious that traffic flow is improved when the traffic lights are disabled.

Might I suggest that the person(s) responsible use some of our hard-earned money that we have paid them, to use their time to carry out a proper survey at these roundabouts - both with and without the traffic lights?

Each survey needs to be over a period of several days and at different times.

Counting the number of vehicles through the roundabouts will not do because the answer will

be the same in either case - actually it will probably be less when the lights are enabled, due to motorists avoiding them by taking different routes.

For instance, I, and many others, drive from Porthcawl to the M4 at Pyle to avoid these lights when travelling eastwards towards Cardiff.

This adds another eight miles to the round trip - more wasted fuel but less wear and tear and less frustration.

Rather, the survey should take account of the number of times vehicles have to stop and start and the length of time vehicles are stationary - all of which contribute to increased wear and tear on vehicles and the highway - and will have increased the carbon footprint of all the vehicles.

Will someone from the council give an indication of when they are going to respond to the issues raised?

**D Norman, Porthcawl**

## Digital Wildmill!

**BRIDGEND** switches to digital TV in March and Communities First has asked digitalUK to come to Wildmill Community Life Centre to answer questions about the digital switchover tomorrow (Friday, January 29) between 1pm-4pm.

There will be a free buffet and the event is open to the whole borough. All welcome.

## HIGH TIDE TIMES

(UNTIL FEBRUARY 4)

The high tides listed in this week's GEM are those in Porthcawl. It should be remembered that along the coast, high tide times will vary. For instance, in Barry, the high point will be 20 - 25 minutes later.

DATE	Time AM	Ht M	Time PM	Ht M
28 Thur	04.26	8.8	16.59	9.1
29 Fri	05.23	9.4	17.46	9.5
30 Sat	06.08	10.2	18.43	10.2
31 Sun	07.05	10.5	19.27	10.3
01 Mon	07.48	10.7	20.12	10.4
02 Tues	08.31	10.7	20.56	10.2
03 Wed	09.09	10.5	21.33	9.7
04 Thur	09.54	9.8	22.09	9.3

## LOCAL INFORMATION

**MADELEINE MOON MP** for Bridgend Westminster office - 02072194417. Constituency office - 47 Nolton Street, Bridgend. Open Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, 10am - 12pm (by appointment only). Telephone 01656 750002.

**HUW IRRANCA-DAVIES MP** for Ogmore Constituency Office 01656 737777

**JANICE GREGORY AM** for Ogmore

Constituency Office 01656 860034

**CARWYN JONES AM** for Bridgend

Constituency office 01656 664320

**Bethan Jenkins AM** for South West Wales

Telephone 01639 643549

**BRIDGEND CAB Citizens' Advice Bureau,**

Ground Floor, 26 Dunraven Place, Bridgend

CF31 1JD 01656 654951 - Open: Monday: 10am

to 2pm - information only; Tuesday to Friday:

10am to 12.30pm - advice sessions. Tuesday to

Friday 12.30pm to 1.30pm - information only.

**MAESTEG CAB Citizens' Advice Bureau**

01656 734662

**POLICE Bridgend 01656 655555**

Porthcawl 01656 785411

**Maesteg 01656 732122**

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(Emergency number 999)

**COASTGUARD 01792 366534**

**GAS (escapes and emergency) 0800 111999**

**ELECTRICITY (power cuts) 0800 0520400**

**WATER SUPPLY (emergency) 0800 0520130**

**FLOOD LINE 0845 9881188**

**HELPLINES**

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**National Drugs Helpline 0800 776600**

**DASH 01656 650686**

**SSAFA - Forces Help** for serving and ex-service

men, women and families in need 01656 785435

**RAF Association Welfare Officer**

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**SAMARITANS** (emotional support) 01656 662333

**MENTAL DISTRESS**

(Mental Health Matters) 01656 767045

**CHILDLINE 0800 1111**

**NSPCC 0800 800500**

**RSPCA 0300 123 0744**

**WOMEN'S AID 01656 766139**

**Bridgend Carers' Centre 01656 658479**

**Alzheimer's Society (Bridgend) 01656 651490**

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**HOSPITALS** Princess of Wales Hospital,

Bridgend 01656 752752/668090.

Bridgend and District NHS Trust

01656 752752/668090.

**VOLUNTARY WORK** Bridgend Association of

Voluntary Organisations (BAVO) 01656 810400

**TOWN AND COMMUNITY COUNCILS**

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Bridgend Town Council 01656 659943

Cefn Cribwr Community Council 01656 741354

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Cornelly Community Council 07882 044798

Pyle Community Council 01656 670251

Coychurch Higher Community Council

01656 863418

Coychurch Lower Community Council

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Garw Valley Community Council 01656 736751

Laleston Community Council 01656 656506

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750663.

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# Newton pupils go green – and get a flag to prove it



ABOVE: The pupils were told about the Green Flag award at a special assembly.

NEWTON Primary School in Porthcawl is celebrating being awarded a Green

Flag – proof that the pupils are aware of environmental issues.

The school's headteacher, Mr Nic Naish, held a special assembly for the pupils, before taking

the flag outside – although it will not be flying proudly in the school grounds until the flag-pole arrives!

He told The GEM: "It is the result of more than two years work, building a portfolio of evidence to show the work that the children have done."

"An essential part of that has been the work of the school's

Eco-council, and the pupils have been very busy, making presentations to parents and fellow pupils, and introducing new green policies."

Mr Naish was joined outside by some of the pupils and Mrs Gore who oversees the work of the school's Eco-council



ABOVE: 'RIGHT, LET'S RUN THIS UP THE FLAGPOLE AND....' (Photographs by Brian Crofts).

## Crime falls in borough, – police report

SOUTH Wales Police revealed this week that crime figures in Bridgend released by the Home Office show that crime in the borough fell during the 12 months to September 2009, compared with the previous year.

"The figures confirm that there were 244 fewer victims of crime for the year – a decrease of 2.5 per cent. There were significant decreases in robbery (down 22.2 per cent) and thefts of motor vehicles (down 20.3 per cent)," a spokesman said.

The number of crimes being solved by officers has also increased, with 130 more offences detected over the same

period.

Chief Superintendent Carl Davies, of Bridgend and Vale police, said: "These crimes can have a devastating effect on someone's quality of life, and we have made a concerted effort in key areas with targeted crime prevention initiatives."

"I am very pleased to see more than 240 fewer victims of crime across the borough, proving that Bridgend is an even safer place for everyone."

"This reduction has also been achieved through effective targeting of key individuals, including prolific offenders who commit a disproportionately high level of crime," he concluded.

## Happy 90th birthday, Bryn!

RIGHT: Brinley ('Bryn') Williams and the front door he built himself at his Bridgend home.



FAMILY and friends will gather at his home in Marie Street, Bridgend tomorrow (Friday) to celebrate the 90th birthday of Mr Brinley Williams.

Bryn (as he is known) was a well-known painter and decorator in the Bridgend area and apart from military service, has resided in the same street all his life.

He is a lifelong member of Nolton Church, joining as a boy chorister at the age of seven, and still attends each

Sunday. He has been married to Anne for 52 years and has a son, Jonathan, a teacher, who lives in Shrewsbury with his partner Helen and children Megan and Ieuan.

His nephew, Glyn, wife Eryl and family, live in Llantwit Major, while another nephew, David, lives in London.

During the last war, Bryn served with the South Wales Borderers, but was badly injured in an air raid.

His wife, Anne, is a member of a well-known Bridgend firm of undertakers, E Morgan.

## St Clare's scoops gold in schools chess challenge...

PUPILS from St Clare's School in Porthcawl were recently awarded a gold certificate from the 'Schools Chess Challenge' (sponsored by British Land plc) for the schools' collective achievements from 2003-2009.

Over the last six years, pupils from the school have regularly been regional winners in different age groups.

In particular, Julia Malec, who is currently preparing for her A-Levels this summer, has won her regional round every year for the last three years.

### RESULTS

2003: Richard Passmore – Boys year-13.

2004: Stephanie Lubbock – Girls year-12; Alexander Burke – Boys year-9.

2007: James Rowland – Boys year-12; Julia Malec – Girls year-10.

2008: Julia Malec – Girls year-11.

2009: Julie Malec – Girls year-12.

Chess is one of many different extra-curricular opportunities on offer in St Clare's School, including Make Your Mark Challenge, Young



JULIA MALEC.

Enterprise, Chemistry Olympiad, Sport, Music and the Duke Of Edinburgh Award Scheme.

Physics teacher, Dr Eric Skelton, has been running the Chess Club for eight years.

He said: "It's always rewarding when pupils win individual competitions, but to be recognised as a school for our collective achievements over the last few years is very rewarding."

Catherine Barnard, head of St Clare's School, commented:

"At St Clare's, we aim to offer our pupils not just the very best academic opportunities, but also a wide range of extra-curricular opportunities to enhance their school experience and develop them as young adults."

## MP organises concerts for Haiti victims

FOLLOWING the recent earthquake in Haiti that has left over 150,000 people dead and more than 1.5 million people

"This is a chance to enjoy an evening showcasing the best talents of our children, while donating money to an extremely important cause."

homeless, Madeleine Moon, the MP for Bridgend, has organised fundraisers concerts featuring choirs from primary schools in the area.

Tickets can be purchased on the door and will cost £2.50.

There will also be collection tins and other fundraising activities.

The concerts will be held at Brackla Tabernacle, Brackla on Thursday, February 4; and also at the Bethlehem Life Centre, Cefn Cribwr on Friday, February 5 (both from 7pm-9pm).

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**Wildlife talk**  
THE South and West Wales Wildlife Trust holds regular meetings on the first Monday of the month at the Ogmore Constituency Labour Party Social Club at 7.30pm, with an entrance charge of £1. On Monday, February 1, there will be a talk by Dr Rob Thomas from Cardiff University, titled 'Life and Death on the High Seas', on the remarkable life of the storm petrel.

These are tiny sparrow-sized sea birds that traverse the world on long distance migrations. They spend most of their lives at sea, only coming ashore at night to visit their breeding colonies during the northern hemisphere's summer.

The storm petrel has become the focus of a Cardiff University research project to consider the impact of climate change on marine eco-systems.

Group secretary Peter Hatherley can be contacted on 01656 662196, for more information.

**Young singer**  
ON Saturday, January 30, at 7pm in Maesteg town hall, the Bridgend Young Singer of the Year competition gives an opportunity to hear the wealth of talent that exists in Bridgend CBC area.

Organised by the Maesteg Gleemen male voice choir, it is not only supported by Bridgend CBC, but also by most local community councils.

Tickets can be obtained from any choir member, or by phoning Dave on 01656 739050.

**ME support**  
ME Support in

## NORTH BRIDGEND NEWS

A message for all readers in the north of Bridgend who would like to have items included in the community news columns of The GEM:

If you wish to submit reports on any social activity in this region, please contact me. I am very approachable and will endeavour to include every newsworthy subject.

Contact details: **CLIVE MITCHELL**  
1 Tyn-Y-Coed Close, Sarn, Bridgend CF32 9NQ  
TEL: 01656 725399  
email: tynycoed1@yahoo.co.uk



**Glamorgan for sufferers of chronic fatigue syndrome holds a special meeting at the Thornhill Community Centre, Cardiff, on February 1, between 3.15pm-5pm.**

One of Wales's leading consultants on fatigue, R Amir Norris will discuss his work.

He has had ME for over 10 years, has helped over 1,000 sufferers.

For more information, telephone 02920 762347 and 08451 285228.

**Fairtrade**  
ALL Saint's Church, Pen-y-Fai members have a table at which they sell Fairtrade products, such as coffee, chutneys, honey and chocolate biscuits.

If any readers would like to support this worthwhile venture, go along to the church, or place an order with Delyth on 01656 724994.

The church allocated two days to the Old Schoolhouse Nursery to hold Christmas concerts.

'The Fairy Doll's Christmas Eve' told how she had become Santa's personal helper. Jackie, the head of the nursery, narrated the story while the children, dressed in a variety of costumes, acted out the parts with

great enthusiasm. **School history**  
Brynmenyn Primary School began as a council infants school at the Betharan Vestry on October 18, 1909.

On October 31, 1910, it transferred to Ynysawdre parish hall, where it remained until the present school was built and opened its doors as Brynmenyn Council mixed and infants school.

The ancient name of Brynmenyn was 'Bryn-y-Meini' the meaning of which was 'Hills of Stones'.

The school has a new nursery/reception area, followed by five classes.

It has an annual award for a pupil in the leavers class, who next year will be in a secondary school.

The SJ Howell award is given to the pupil who not only attains a good academic result, but shows a positive attitude to school life, such as politeness and good manners.

It is dedicated to the bravery of a young female teacher who died rescuing a pupil from the Llynfi river which was in flood in 1911.

The winner of this award receives a shield and a small cash sum.

In addition there are

other year awards for language, mathematics, best endeavour, attendance and sports.

The school also has the Yolande Osborne award for art. Yolande Osborne had been a governor at the school for many years, and also a community councillor.

**Reserve trail**  
THE staff at the Parc Slip Nature Reserve, Tondy are organising a Valentine's trail suitable for young children aged between three and eight.

They will then be encouraged to match animal pairs.

The cost is £1.50 per child, with no charge for responsible adults.

Telephone 01656 724100.

**Nifty needles**  
St Tyfodwg's church, Glynogwr members would like to thank the Ogmore Vale Nifty Needles club which has donated various hand-made items to the church for sale to help church funds; the organiser was Iris Palmer.

**WI branch**  
THE Aberkenfig and District Women's Institute's January meeting had to be cancelled because of the adverse weather conditions.

## New conductor

Ogmore Valley Silver Band has announced the appointment of new conductor, Alice Jones, a member of the St Asaph military band.

The band look forward to welcoming home bass trombone player Lloyd Roderick in six months, from Afghanistan.

The band is bidding farewell to Roy Owen, who, at the tender age of 83, has decided to retire as a competing bandsman.

He has been an extremely committed member of the band and will be missed by all.

It is the only band in Bridgend CBC area that participates in national brass band competitions.

It rehearses at the band room in Bethania Row, Ogmore Vale on Sunday evenings between 6pm-8pm, Wednesdays between 7pm-9pm.

Visitors are welcome at rehearsals.

## Who wants to build what?

Mrs M Bevan - Pen yr Heol, 14 Church View, Laleston, Bridgend - conservatory to rear. Bridge VIS - Bronfair allotment, off Cymdu Road, Maesteg - allotment including two sheds, one toilet building and one polytunnel for visually impaired society at Bronfair.

Persimmon Homes East Wales Ltd - land at Parc Derwen, Coity - approval of reserved matters for access, appearance, landscaping, layout and scale for 112 dwellings at site R5 and R25.

Mr and Mrs Stretch - 1 Esplanade Avenue, Porthcawl - extension and refurbishment of existing building and change of use from guest house to dwelling. Ashtenne Industrial Fund Ltd - former Christie Tyler site, Abergarw Road, Brynmenyn, Bridgend - mixed use redevelopment to include residential and/or nursing home and employment, high-ways works and other associated works.

Mr WR Evans - 29 Abercrown Road, Evanston, Bridgend - two storey extension to rear of property, incorporating bathroom to first floor.

Mrs D Davies - 17 Katie Street, Blaengarw, Bridgend - c/u from art studio to retail shop food prep area and office use and double storey extension to rear.

Miss Kirsty Richards - 11 Caerau Road, Maesteg - change of use to takeaway.

Mr M Jones - 6 Mary Street, Porthcawl - rear dormer pitched roof on front gable.

# Charities cash in after another successful swim



ABOVE: Maureen Howells was presented with this painting of the Christmas swim by local artist Bennie Warren. She is pictured with swim committee member Owen Richards. (See facing page for more photographs).

**A RECORD number of charities benefited from this year's Porthcawl Christmas Swim - and representatives turned up last week for the grand hand-over.**

The event took place at the Hi-Tide Inn, and a total of 17 cheques were distributed to deserving local causes.

There were 18 presented, the exception being a donation the Haiti earthquake appeal.

Master of ceremonies for the evening was Ian Stroud, the swim committee's publicity officer, and he opened the evening by offering thanks to people involved in organising the swim.

He thanked Geoff and Fran Dower of the Hi-Tide for their role in hosting the swimmers on the day, and he introduced the committee members: Nicola Willis (chairman and facebook correspondent); Wendy Richards (vice-chair); Marilyn Richards (treasurer); Linda Stroud (secretary); Jeff Tombs (swim co-ordinator) and Owen Richards, who rebuilt the website (www.christmasswim.org).

He emphasised that this year, the swim had raised a record sum, and commiserated with Vic Davies, saying that Vic would like to be the oldest swimmer, but he keeps getting pipped by Ken James, who is 83.

He added that Ken had said on the morning of the swim that this would be his last - but since then he had changed his mind!

Ian told the audience that the committee put this year's fine weather on Christmas Day down to the watching eyes of departed swim supporters, and paid a tribute to Dai 'Viking' Thomas, who died earlier this

year. He said: "Dai was a stalwart of the Christmas swim, and of Porthcawl Lifeguard Club, and we are all delighted that the new clubhouse will be named after him."

In fact, the swim committee has donated a trophy in Dai Viking's name to the lifeguards, and the intention is that it will be awarded to a family that has contributed to the club.

He also thanked local photographer Mike Stubbs, who had made a DVD of the swim, which was shown during the evening. Mike said, had even given up part of his Christmas day to rush the DVD down to ITV in Cardiff!

He also thanked GEM photographer Glyn Evans for his work in recent years in photographing the swim.

Later, treasurer Marilyn Richards stepped forward to give the facts and financial figures of this year's swim. She said: "We are distributing a total of £7,563 in grants - a record."

"In addition, we ask swimmers who have been sponsored for their own cause to let us know how they did, and those who have responded say they have raised more than £2,000.

"However, we all believe that this is just the tip of the iceberg, and that there is a lot more out there that we don't know about."

One charity chose this year as a main beneficiary was the Forces Comfort Fund, which received £151. This went to the local branch, which is supported by the Porthcawl and District Chamber of Trade.

John Westwood, from the chamber of trade, explained the type of goods that would be sent to troops serving abroad - quite a few relating to personal freshness and hygiene!

However, the biggest cheque went to a local charity that is highly regarded in Bridgend county borough. Y Bont, the centre for children with disabilities and their families, received £2,500.

Marged Griffiths, from the Bridgend-based charity, told the audience about the extensive work done at Y Bont, and about the constant struggle to raise funds.

Finally, there was one personal presentation. Local artist Bennie Warren had donated her painting of the swim to the committee, and it was bought by Dave Jones of the Hi-Tide - on condition that it be donated to Mrs Maureen Howells.

Maureen is the widow of Stan Howells, the long-time secretary of the swim committee, and it fair to say that there wasn't a dry eye in the house!

**The other beneficiaries were as follows:**  
Bridgend Talking Newspaper Association - £300.

Porthcawl Stroke Club - £600.

Porthcawl and Pyle Boxing Club - £750.

Porthcawl Civic Fund - £150.

Trinity Care Club - £200.

Porthcawl Athletic Association - £300.

Porthcawl YMCA - £200.

The Buckancers - £250.

HM Coastguard - £250.

Porthcawl Fire Service - £250.

Porthcawl RNLI - £250.

Porthcawl St John Ambulance - £250.

Rest Bay Lifeguards - £250.

Porthcawl Lifeguards - £400.

Haiti Earthquake appeal - £150.

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# Local charities cash in on yet another successful Christmas swim in Porthcawl

## PHOTOGRAPHS by GLYN EVANS

Other pictures are  
available from this event.

Pictures can be purchased  
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**RIGHT:**  
The biggest cheque went to Y Bont, and  
it was presented by Porthcawl Deputy  
Mayor, Coun Mary Emmet Lewis.

**BELOW:**  
Aubrey Lewis of Porthcawl and Pyle  
Boxing Club (right) and Tony Ulberini  
of Porthcawl Athletic Association (left).



**ABOVE (RIGHT):**  
Jackie Rees and  
Pat Thomas of  
Porthcawl St John  
Ambulance, with  
committee chair  
Nicloa Willis.

**LEFT:**  
Representing  
Porthcawl Stroke  
Club were Keith  
Duggan (left) and  
Jack Mitchell.



**ABOVE:** John Westwood of the Forces  
Comfort Fund with the deputy mayor.

**BELOW:** Kerry Marlow of the  
Buckaneers (left) and Peter Price (right)  
of Porthcawl Coastguards.



Jackie Graham (left)  
of Trinity Care Club,  
with Mair Nixon.



**ABOVE:**  
David Philpott of  
the Ogrw Talking  
Newspaper group.

**LEFT:** Vic Davies  
with Steph  
Davenport of  
Porthcawl  
Lifeguards.



**RIGHT:**  
Dick King of  
Porthcawl Fire  
Service.

**ABOVE**  
(Left to right): The  
Rev Colin Richards,  
Mike Clarke and  
John Berry  
represented  
Porthcawl YMCA.



**RIGHT:**  
Gareth Davies of  
Rest Bay Lifeguard  
Club.



**ABOVE:** Swim  
committee chair  
Nicola Willis, pre-  
sented a cheque to  
the Mayor's Civic  
Fund.



**RIGHT:**  
Ross Martin of  
Porthcawl RNLI.

**LEFT:** Master of  
ceremonies Ian  
Stroud.





# PORTHCAWL'S TWELFTH NIGHT PULLS OUT ALL THE STOPS FOR THE SANDVILLE

## PHOTOGRAPHS by KEITH E MORGAN

ONCE AGAIN, Porthcawl's grand charity extravaganza, the annual Twelfth Night Fancy Dress Party at the Hi-Tide, was a great success.

Three reception rooms were filled with revellers and the fancy dress turn-out was fabulous.

Onlookers were amazed at the ingenuity behind many of the fancy dress entries.

As usual, the prime movers were Arthur and Marilyn Beale, together with Dave and Patricia Jones, who lead a large team of supporters.

The event was held in the Hi-Tide, thanks to the generosity of Geoff and Francesca Dower.

This year, the event was not short of celebrities, and the star guest was Ruth Madoc of *Hi Dee Hi!* fame. Owen Money, who lives in Porthcawl, was happy with a 'walk-on part' - entering the fancy dress as Susan Boyle, the runner-up on *Britain's Got Talent*.

The evening was compered by Robbie Dee, with plenty of musical entertainment from two local bands.

'Casual Affair' - comprising Ian Griffin (key-board); Rob Gillespie (drums); Jo Senclaire (vocals); and Lennie Dee, (lead vocal) - were followed by 'Scotch Mist' - featuring Maru, Dave, Roger and Eric.

All proceeds from the evening go to the Sandville Self Help Centre at Ton Kenfig, and at the latest count, the centre can expect a bumper cheque of £8,500!

Barclays Bank is the main supporter adding £750 to the cash raised by the raffle. This year the proceeds from the raffle were £2,400, so Barclays £750 gave a grand total of £3,150!

Local photographer Mike Stubbs has made a DVD of the evening (price £10), with all profits going to the Sandville. To buy a copy, telephone Mike on 07968 974272.



ABOVE: Jill George and Helen Deeks (representing Barclays Bank) showing the raffle prizes to 'Fairy Liquid' (Arthur Beale).



Special guest Ruth Madoc with Gwyneth Poacher of the Sandville.



ABOVE: First prize in the group category went to 'The Midget Rockers'.



Owen Money 'Dreamed a Dream'.



Get your DVD of 12th Night from Mike Stubbs!



ABOVE: The Sandville Self-Help Centre team!



Dr Alison Jones took second prize in the female singles section.



ABOVE: Joanne Watts (out of her Humpty Dumpty costume) receiving her prize for first place in the female singles section.



ABOVE: First prize in the men's singles section.



# LOCAL CHARITY IS THE REAL WINNER AS PORTHCAWL ENJOYS ITS BIG NIGHT OUT!

**PHOTOGRAPHS by  
KEITH E MORGAN**



ABOVE: Tied for third place in the doubles were 'Frankenstein' and 'Tiger Woods'.



ABOVE: Second prize in the groups section went to 'The Grand National'.



ABOVE: The Grim Reaper had to settle for second place in the men's singles.



ABOVE: Third prize in the groups went to 'The X-Files'.



ABOVE: The 'Severn' Riverdancers.



ABOVE: First prize in the doubles went to 'Scots Porridge Oats'.



Joanne Watts in costume as Humpty Dumpty (see facing page).





# 'MoD college past the point of no return'

## First Minister's support is welcomed

John Smith, MP for the Vale, last week welcomed the new First Minister's 'close personal interest' in 'making sure the benefits of the £12 billion Defence Technical College at MoD St Athan are maximised in Wales.'

Mr Smith said: "I welcome Carwyn Jones's firm commitment to the St Athan project. I want people here in the Vale and across Wales to remember that both the UK Government and the Welsh Assembly Government are fully

behind the Defence Technical College going ahead at St Athan.

"They have repeatedly backed up their words of support with deeds. To date, the Government has underwritten over £110 million of essential works linked with the project to get the site ready for construction.

"I believe that we have gone beyond the point of no return and this Government has no intention of walking away from St Athan."

In his letter to Mr Smith, who has been at the forefront of the campaign to bring the tri-service MoD college to Wales, at St Athan, Carwyn Jones, the AM for Bridgend, said: "I

fully agree with you that the Defence Technical College is a major opportunity for Wales at St Athan.

"I very much support and welcome this investment as it will provide a significant boost for jobs, skills training and supply chain opportunities.

"I know that you have championed its cause

from the outset and I want to reassure you that my officials are working closely with the Ministry of Defence, Metrix and with local partners to deliver the project and to maximize the benefits for Wales.

"Rest assured that I will continue to take a close personal interest in this matter," Mr Jones concluded.

## On the record!

**MEETINGS of Porthcawl Town Council are to be recorded - in order to assist with compiling the minutes.**

The council has decided to carry out a six-month trial using audio equipment in meetings.

Council leader David Deere said that he had already discussed this with Coun Norah Clarke, leader of the Liberal Democrats.

"It was brought up by the clerk on her first day. It will be a temporary measure. The equipment is already here."

Coun Clarke had no objections, as the council had used audio equipment in the past, but only for full council meetings: "There were protocols set down with

the tapes kept in a locked cupboard. All members could listen to them in the presence of the clerk," she recalled.

However, new clerk Alison Leyshon stated she had looked back through council documents for the protocols but could not find any. She had also contacted BCBC to ask about theirs.

Coun Alana Davies felt this could be a useful back-up for the taking of minutes to clarify points as and when necessary: "Once minutes have been approved, the tapes are wiped."

Coun Deere moved that the council approve this and that the clerk draw up protocols for approval.

# Elderly give Assembly minister a grilling...



ABOVE: Retired residents pictured at their meeting with the Assembly minister.

**JANE HUTT, AM for the Vale, gave a talk to the Ogmores-by-Sea Retired Residents Association at their first meeting of 2010 at the Watermill Pub, where they meet every month.**

She spoke about her role as an Assembly minister and AM serving the adjoining county borough.

Afterwards, Ms Hutt reported: "There was a lively discussion following my talk, with many issues raised, including the frequency of buses, arrangements for waste disposal, home insulation, the Older People's Forum and the need for community facilities in Ogmores-by-Sea.

"I was delighted to have the opportunity of meeting so many active retired residents."

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## CAMPAIGN TO TACKLE DILAPIDATED SEATS

**THE dilapidated state of many of the public seats in Porthcawl has been raised at Porthcawl Town Council.**

Mr Gary Victor, of Porthcawl SHOUT, told the meeting that they were starting a campaign to encourage BCBC to replace or repair broken seats throughout the town.

He asked what the town council's involvement was in getting seats repaired.

Mayor Rosemary Deere told him that the town council employs a full time handyman who has started repairing the wooden seats in the town.

"The problem is that he can repair the seats one day but the following day they are vandalised," she said.

"I can assure you that we have great concerns regarding the seats.

"Where they are being replaced, it is by indestructible material and not seats with wooden slats.

"They are the ones being vandalised."

She added that SHOUT would get a full written answer on this subject.

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## Organisation 'Lites' up youngsters' lives! Charity helps Ty Hafan with children's high-tech entertainment treat...

**CHILDREN** at Ty Hafan have been given a 'state-of-the-art' entertainment package from a national charity.

At a recent special celebration, the technology charity Lifelites officially handed over a fully managed package of the latest home technologies for the children and young people at Ty Hafan, the family hospice for young lives.

This is the third upgrade from Lifelites for the families who use the hospice. Now they can play the games with fabulous new HD wide screens, and the computer equipment comes with adaptations such as touch screens and special mice.

This will enable all the children and young people, whatever their abilities, to continue their studies and talk to their friends and teachers; and new digital and video cameras also help to make a lasting record of the special time they spend together at the hospice.

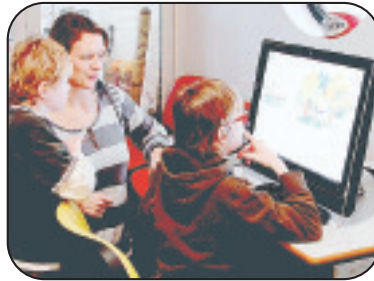
The equipment will complement the 'home-from-home' atmosphere the hospice creates. All this is provided with managed internet to keep the children and young people safe while they surf.

Lifelites is also supplying all of the telecoms and Sky connections free of charge, and will maintain the equipment along the way, meaning that the hospice's own funds and care staff activities can remain concentrated on delivering care for the children and young people, and support for their families.

Jayne Saunders, director of care at Ty Hafan said: "The computers and equipment will be extremely popular with the children and young people using the hospice, providing hours of enjoyment, interaction and fun (not to mention a welcome distraction for many of the parents). We would like to sincerely thank Lifelites for their ongoing support."

"We are delighted to be able to provide this package for Ty Hafan," said Simone Enefer-Doy, chief executive of Lifelites.

"We know from the care staff and parents what a difference it makes to the children and young people to be able to use the equipment using the special adaptations and software we provide, and how it adds to their enjoyment of the time they spend at the hospice."



*Ty Hafan hospice care worker Mags Butler, with brothers Sam and Michael Gooding, enjoying the new equipment.*

## Torchlight walk for Haiti victims

**MEMBERS** of St Baruc's Church are inviting people in Barry to join them on a torchlight walk to raise money for those in need after the earthquake in Haiti.

The fundraising event has been organised by St Baruc's Church, Barry Island, and will take place on Friday, February 12 at 7pm.

Walkers are asked to carry a torch, and to wear an item of high visibility clothing.

An organiser said: "The theme is to bring some light into the lives

of the people in despair in Haiti. The walk will start at All Saints Church, Park Road, Barry, and go around the garden suburb area, returning to All Saints.

"It will be three miles long, but with an option to do just two."

She continued: "Donations may be brought on the night, or taken to Island Leisure Family Amusement Centre on the promenade under the western shelter, Barry Island, on the weekends.

"They can also be taken to St Baruc's Church, or All Saints Church, Park Road, Barry on Sunday mornings."

All money collected will be paid to Christian Aid via the Parish of Barry account.

*We welcome your news, views and sports items. Please email them to the Editorial Department at: [ggem@internet-today.co.uk](mailto:ggem@internet-today.co.uk)*

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## COUNCIL LAUNCHES A NEW HELPLINE IN BID TO FIGHT HATE CRIME

A NEW helpline for people to report incidents of hate crime has been launched by the Vale Council.

The confidential helpline is among the first in Wales. It will act as a valuable channel for the council, working closely with local equality organisations and South Wales Police, to identify and tackle incidents.

A hate crime is classified as either a physical or verbal attack motivated by the victim's race, colour, ethnic origin, nationality, religion, gender, sexual orientation or disability.

To mark the launch, local organisations including Stonewall Cymru, Show Racism the Red Card, South Wales Police, Cardiff & Vale Coalition of Disabled People, Race Equality First, Atal y Fro and the Vale Centre for Voluntary Services joined council officers, members and Vale Mayor Coun Emlyn Williams at the Mayor's



*Representatives of local equality organisations met with council officers, members and Vale Mayor Coun Emlyn Williams to celebrate the launch of the new 'Report a Hate Crime' helpline.*

Parlour. Vale council leader, Coun Gordon Kemp, said: "Even though more hate crime incidents are being reported in our area, there's still a long way to go. This helpline will provide a valuable method of communication for all of those affected by this type of crime."

Supported by a 'report a hate crime' function available on the council's website, the new helpline will allow victims, or those who are witness to a crime, to

report details to the council. The service is entirely confidential and callers have the option to remain anonymous.

Alicja Zalesinska, of Race Equality First, said: "It's very important that helplines like this exist, especially for those who are afraid to speak up if not encouraged, so that there's always someone out there to help."

Robert Goddard, of Stonewall Cymru, agreed: "This is a really

important initiative and this launch shows the Vale's commitment to dealing with the issue of hate crime - that it's being taken seriously and dealt with seriously."

*If you, or someone you know, has been the victim of a hate crime, make sure it's reported. Call 01446 700111 or visit [www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/report-hate-crime](http://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/report-hate-crime) to fill in an incident form.*

## Can you give Scooby a home?

*The GEM has joined forces with the Dog's Trust to find caring new owners for animals at its Bridgend Rehoming Centre (Telephone: 01656 725219)*

### THIS WEEK:

Scooby is a cross-breed, 2-5 years old, described by a spokeswoman as a bright and lively boy with a friendly and outgoing nature.

"He is very sweet, affectionate and playful with people. He has been in the centre since February 2009 and needs a home as soon as possible as he is getting quite stressed in the kennel environment."

"He is very under-socialised around other dogs and he will need help to develop his canine social skills, once settled and less stressed in a home."

"He's highly trainable; he just needs to have his energy chan-



**SCOOPY.**

nelled in the right direction."

Type of home needed: He is suitable with children 11 years and over who are used to dogs.

"His new owners will need to be prepared to continue his socialising with other dogs. He'll suit someone who has owned and trained a large dog before", she added

## Breast cancer support group

**THE** voluntary organisation LIFT (Life Is For Today) is a self-help group for those affected by breast cancer which offers support and friendship to people living in the Vale.

The next LIFT group meetings will be in Cowbridge on Wednesday, February 3 between 10am-1pm and Wednesday, February 17 between 2pm-4pm.

New members welcome. Contact Hilary on 01446 749756, or Anne on 01446 772843 for further information.

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# The Beech Tree Inn at Culverhouse Cross

## A New Beginning ...

**SNUGLY** tucked away right next door to the ITV Wales Television Centre at Culverhouse Cross lies one of the Vale's best kept secrets of recent months.

Since its opening at the beginning of October, The Beech Tree Inn – a stunning 18th Century barn conversion set in an acre of grounds with private parking for 50 cars – has already developed a dedicated following and a reputation for being one of the finest fish and seafood restaurants in the area.

The owner, ex-Barry schoolboy and former racing driver, Anthony Armelin, explains the circumstances surrounding the new project: "I was abroad on holiday at the time when I received a text from one of my former employees saying 'Sorry to hear the news about Gilby's'. I thought, hang on a second, what news?"

Mr Armelin, who bought the land in 1996, opened the hugely successful Gilby's Restaurant in 1997 and ran it as chef/proprietor for 10 heady years. He said: "I sold Gilby's in June 2007 but, unfortunately, the company I sold it to was unable to survive the recession and, after a classic moonlight flit, went into liquidation leaving me in something of a quandary – empty properties simply don't pay the bills!"

A decision was soon taken with five of his most loyal and trusted staff from the old Gilby's days to open up again as a brand new venture – and they haven't looked back since.

**"The Beech Tree Inn is a great fish restaurant. There's everything, from prawn cocktail and fish and chips to caviar, lobster and dover sole. They even have a fantastic selection of meat, including the very best pedigree Welsh Black steaks."**

The restaurant and kitchen have undergone a major refurbishment with a stunning use of mirrors in the dining-room; cream walls, beech tables and soft leather seating help to create a light and airy ambience. The new look is a striking combination of traditional charm and comfort with a chic and modern feel.

Service is friendly and informal, the management making a priority of employing "genuine, happy, smiley faces to train as waiting staff." "We had a lot of fun with that ad" Arlene



Restaurant manager Deb King with her front of house management team Teresa Goodwin, Louise McShane and Arlene Mason.

Mason explained. "We have a young, enthusiastic team that we've trained in-house, ourselves. They're a great bunch and they all genuinely love what they're doing." And it shows.

And so to food. Dining at The Beech Tree Inn is very much a sensory experience. From the moment you walk through the door, you are totally seduced by the sights, sounds and smells of a real open kitchen – fiery flambés, lots of whisking and chopping and generous whiffs of garlic and fresh herbs. It's colourful, vibrant and alive! The kitchen, under the guidance of joint head chefs Rob Sharp and Mike Jones, sources the very best produce available from suppliers right across the UK. "We try to cater for every taste, but the emphasis is firmly on buying the freshest produce and cooking it with as little fuss as possible."

Live shellfish arrives in the kitchen daily and, along with lobsters, oysters and mussels there is a superb selection of fresh fish beautifully displayed on crushed ice including dover sole, lemon sole, sea bass, monkfish and hake. Meat lovers will also be pleasantly surprised by a mouth-watering choice of staples, such as calf's liver and bacon, venison, poultry, duck, rack of lamb and the finest pedigree Welsh Black steaks from farms all over Wales. There's even an authentic Italian selection, including pasta and risotto, and a tempting vegetarian option is always available. With soup of the day at £3.75 and main courses starting at £7.95, the menu really must be seen to be believed!

And, of course, you simply daren't leave without sampling one of their classic homemade desserts, such as glazed tarte au citron, a huge fresh fruit pavlova with soft marshmallow meringue, a sensational hot chocolate fondant straight from the oven and their, now famous, exceptional vanilla crème brûlée. All desserts are priced at a very reasonable £4.95.

**"I'm delighted to have Deb King on board as Restaurant Manager. For many years Deb was one half of the highly-acclaimed Woods Bistro in Talbot Green, a gastronomic mecca for foodies everywhere. Between us, we have been fortunate enough to have won almost every award available."**

**Anthony Armelin**

Mr Armelin firmly believes consumer confidence in a product is all-important for success and is justifiably proud of the industry recognition that he, and Deb King, have achieved over the years. Some of the awards are: AA Restaurant of the Year for Wales, The Red Book Bistro of the Year, 2 AA Rosettes, entry into the Which? Good Food Guide and the highly coveted Michelin Bib Gourmand Award on numerous occasions.

He said, "I really do think our track record reassures guests that we genuinely care and that we'll always do our very best to provide a fantastic dining experience – each and every time."

The Beech Tree Inn at Culverhouse Cross. A marvellous restaurant in a fabulous location offering real, everyday value for money.

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## A new board will oversee Bryngarw – in bid for funds

AS briefly reported earlier, a management board is to be set up to oversee Bryngarw Country Park and Bryngarw House.

Bridgend County Borough Council's cabinet has agreed to set up the board as part of a bid for European money to upgrade facilities at the park.

The new board, consisting entirely of officers drawn from different departments, will oversee the strategic management of the park and house and also the B-LEAF project, which is also based there.

This involves people with learning difficulties who grow and sell plants.

There is already a review of Bryngarw under way, with various options to be considered, including involving a partner from the private sector in the running of

the house, although no decisions have been taken.

The council is seeking a more sustainable business model for the future.

The report to cabinet states that there is still considerable potential at Bryngarw for development as a tourist destination and a focal point to showcase local culture and heritage.

It could also benefit from a growing educational market in environmental issues and horticulture.

Councils in south west Wales have been invited by Visit Wales, which runs tourism for the Welsh Assembly Government, to collaborate on an 'historic gardens' theme.

Bridgend is working with Swansea, Ceredigion, Carmarthenshire and Neath Port Talbot on a joint bid to improve and promote historical parks

and gardens.

At Bryngarw, the plan is to enhance the profile of the historic park and garden by restoration and enhancement, plus providing new and better visitor facilities.

The current visitor centre in the park will be extended and improved to become an indoor base for co-ordinating a range of environmental and heritage events and volunteer activities.

The existing toilets, classroom and café facilities will be upgraded and extended to create a multi-functional venue for things like educational visits, re-enactment performances and small conferences.

This use would link directly with the cultural events already taking place including the summer arts festival. Investment would be made in audio visual equipment and presentation facilities.

The B-LEAF day services project would be given a shop front for visitors.

The project would add Bryngarw to a network of gardens for visitors throughout south Wales.

One of the main tasks of the new board would be to look at ways of reducing the subsidy to Bryngarw House, with a view to its eventual removal.

The council is to explore the possibility of market testing with commercial operators to see if it can be run on a commercial basis.

The cost of the work planned at Bryngarw is £650,00 with the EU grant, if agreed, covering £390,000 of that.

The rest could come from a separate bid to the Western Valleys Strategic Regeneration Area Fund.

Trussell Trust.

Foodbanks provide emergency food aid to local individuals and families suffering from a short term crisis. Clients are referred to the foodbank from local support agencies and front line care workers.

Adrian Curtis from the Trussell Trust, said: "This year is expected to be a very difficult time for many families in Bridgend. For some, the choice between paying essential bills and paying for food can force a family into crisis. The foodbank is a lifeline to those in greatest need."

Bridgend Foodbank is holding a special food collection at Tesco Bridgend on February 19. The foodbank accepts tinned and dried food items that are 'in date' and undamaged.

Donations can be brought to The Well Christian Centre, Nolton Street, Bridgend on Tuesdays or Fridays between 12pm-2pm. To arrange a food collection event at your school, club, church or community group, call the foodbank office on 01656 668870.

## BRIDGEND GEM QUIZ LEAGUE

### Laleston Inn 'A' completes a 'demolition' job

THERE were two or three surprise results on January 18, the biggest perhaps was by Laleston Inn 'A' themselves after their 'demolition' of Oldcastle 'A' by 53-33.

They said: "Everything seemed to go right for us and wrong for our opponents."

The leaders, Royal Oak Nomads, were beaten by Maesteg Catholic Club. Nomads led by three after the written section and then came calamity. They lost the individual round 9-2 and although both teams scored 10 each in the remaining round, they couldn't get back, and so Maesteg are joint top with them.

Mackworth Arms maintained their recent good form and beat Llynfi Arms 43-40, and Llangeinor AFC surprised Royal Oak Royals by winning 44-36.

Prince of Wales 'A' had to wait until the previous week to win their first match of the season and proceeded to repeat the performance at Tondur Railway Club by 47-40.

In Division 2, Cabo

Roche have been going quite well but went down, unexpectedly, at Laleston Inn 'B' who scored 55 to Cabo's 52.

Prince of Wales 'B' beat Pheasant Poachers 52-43 to stay joint top with Llangeinor Arms, who won 45-40 against Heol-y-Cyw RFC.

Two away wins with similar scores complete the week's results – Gamekeepers' 49-42 victory at Oddfellows Arms and Oldcastle 'B' winning at Pyle RFC by 49-43.

Here are this week's posers:

1 Which pale yellow gas is the lightest of the halogens and is also the most reactive chemical element?

2 Vinson Massif is the highest mountain on which continent?

3 Which British cyclist came fourth overall at the 2009 Tour de France?

4 What is the only mythological creature of the 12 animals that represent the Chinese New Year?

A RUDGE  
(Hon sec BGQL)

4 A Dragon.  
3 Bradley Wiggins.  
2 Antarctica.  
1 Fluorine.  
ANSWERS

## Bridgend Council launches building apprentice scheme

A NEW pilot has been approved by Bridgend Council's cabinet. The council's scheme will give six apprentices the opportunity to work with the building section on a three-year rolling programme.

If the pilot is successful, it will act as a springboard for the council to widen the apprenticeship scheme to include other areas of local authority work.

There are no specific eligibility criteria for the pilot, but all apprentices would need to complete a basic skills assessment.

Bridgend College will be a key partner in the scheme, and it has already identified a potential group of students to be considered for an apprenticeship placement and who will get to "earn while they learn".

Coun Huw David, cabinet member for resources, said: "This is a great initiative for Bridgend County Borough Council as an organisation."

"We have an ageing workforce and we do have shortages in certain areas, so this is one way we can tackle this issue."

## 'Say no to the doorstep traders' residents urged

BRIDGEND County Borough Council (CBCB) is urging residents to beware of rogue traders who may try to take advantage of damage caused by adverse weather conditions.

Deputy Leader, Coun David Sage, said:

"These traders are cold calling, offering no cancellation rights and can charge exorbitant rates for shoddy work."

"When things start to go wrong with the work done, as they invariably do, customers find that they have been given false addresses and telephone numbers that no longer exist."

"Some will pose as officials from various organisations to add credibility, the most

popular being council workers. Others will tell householders that they have materials left over from another job so can be done cheaply, that they have a special offer which is only valid if a householder decides straight away, or that they've noticed a roof or tree in need of urgent work and if it's not fixed straightaway it will cause major problems."

"Not only do these traders 'rip-off' consumers but can also be a front for other types of crime."

"So CBCB's Trading Standards team, together with South Wales Police, urge residents to say no to doorstep traders."

## Snow leaves its mark..!



The recent snow falls sent photographers out and about looking for a striking image of the countryside in winter. Porthcawl photographer MALCOLM NUGENT came up with this unusual offering – a leaf on the snow, shrivelled up by the sudden cold.

## NEWS IN AND OUT OF CLASS AT LITCHARD PRIMARY SCHOOL

### 2010 promises plenty of fun in school

Welcome back! WE hope you all enjoyed the festive season and that the children have returned to school refreshed and ready to work hard.

2010 signals yet another exciting year, with lots of activities planned for the children.

July will see the start of building work to link the buildings as a Primary school.

Swimming stars

A VERY big well done to Rhys Loveluck from 3S on passing his Stage 5 swimming award – Rhys is now working hard to achieve Stage 6!

Congratulations also to Samantha Meadows (5M) who has completed her Level 6 swimming award. Samantha had to do 40m each of butterfly, breaststroke, front crawl, backstroke and a 40m dolphin dive. She also had to demonstrate skulling (head first and

then feet first).

Well done also to Steffennie Brookes (5M) who has passed her Rookie Lifeguard bronze award and is now working hard to earn her silver award.

Well done, Nia! WELL done to Nia Bayliss (5M), who has recently received a letter from the Samaritans thanking her for her kind donation of £31.50.

Nia raised the money by selling Christmas cards that she had made herself.

As a special treat she has been invited to a Thank You reception at the council offices in April, where she will meet the Mayor. Keep up the good work Nia!

Year-2 wedding

AS part of our RE topic "Celebrations" this term, year-2 re-enacted a wedding at Litchard Mission Church.

The children chose the bride (Eve Davies) and the groom (Dylan

Lewis), bridesmaids and other members of the wedding party.

Alex Longmire and Tom Matthews read wedding poems during the service. The bride and groom cut the cake on return to school and Year One joined in the "Evening Celebrations".

Mrs Hughes and Mrs Parslow would like to thank the Pastor and Mr Penry and the church elders for their help and support.

Super swimmers CONGRATULATIONS to the following children who have received swimming awards recently.

Rubi Lewis (year-1) – Rainbow distance Award for 5M backstroke and 5M frontcrawl and national plan award Stage 2.

Ffion Howe (year-1) – national plan Award Level 2.

Dafydd Rees (year-2) – Stage 1 Swimming Award.

Dafydd Rees also received an Egyptian expert certificate. Well done Dafydd!

## Police team up for award

TWO members of South Wales Police based in Bridgend have been shortlisted for an award which celebrates a cleaner and greener public sector in Wales.

Tristan Davies and Dan Ferris were selected for the Envirowise Green Star Champion 2010 Award after demonstrating a strong commitment to sustainability and taking steps to improve environmental performance.

They are responsible

for the police environmental unit and to date have helped the force achieve financial savings of more than £10,000, achieve Green Dragon Level 3 and reduce waste to landfill by approximately 50 per cent.

The winner will be announced at the annual Wales Public Sector Conference in February which will see the award ceremony form part of the day for the first time.

## Foodbank has taste of busy times ahead



Busy days for the foodbank.

THE Bridgend Foodbank fed 64 local people from 18 families during December and with both volunteers and clients increasing, the project is expecting a busy year ahead.

Ann Griffiths of the Bridgend Foodbank, said: "The demand for emergency food has been greater than we expected. It is sad to see local people in crisis."

"Without the help of the foodbank, they would have struggled to feed their families this Christmas. Local churches, businesses, schools, and members of the public have so far contributed about two-and-a-half tons of food."

"However, the stock is steadily decreasing so we are appealing to the general public for further donations."

The foodbank opened in December and is located in The Well Christian Centre, Nolton Street, Bridgend. The charity is part of a rapidly growing network of foodbanks in Wales managed by The



## Council tax is set to rise

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

In a report on the revenue budget, the cabinet was told that although Bridgend received an increase of 2.6 per cent in the money it receives from the Welsh Assembly Government and business rates, the final settlement "remains inadequate to meet existing service pressures and normal inflationary increases, let alone additional service pressures and desires for service improvement."

The cabinet heard that the council had suffered a shortfall in funding in recent years and this had resulted in a "backlog of budgetary pressures."

There have already been reports to the cabinet in recent months about the pressures on the adult social care budget as a result of an ageing population, plus a need for extra money for looked-after children.

The council is grappling with the need to implement equal pay and is carrying out job evaluation across the board. This is likely to cost £3m in the new financial year.

There are also problems with backlogs of building and highways maintenance.

Although increases have been allowed in some areas, other areas have had to find savings and the budget contains savings of £2.4m with

further cuts over the next two years of £8m.

The report warns that there will be difficult and challenging decisions to be taken.

It adds: "The ability of the council to achieve savings of around £8m over the following two years will be severely constrained, unless alternative methods of service delivery are actively explored and opportunities for partnership working optimised."

"The council has to look at modernising services and different service delivery models to ensure that services continue to be fit for purpose and delivered in an effective and efficient manner."

Increases in spending included in the budget for the new year include:

- £1m for independent foster placements for children in care.
- £271,000 for work on Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Llangynwyd as the school grows year by year.

- £200,000 for highways maintenance.

- £150,000 to deal with increased homelessness.

- £153,000 cost of implementing changes needed in the wake of the e-coli inquiry.

- £541,000 in adult social care budget because of increasing number of older people needing help.

- £320,000 more for residential and nursing

home fees.

Savings in the budget include:

- Cuts of £30,000 to private nursery schools.

- £680,000 savings from changes to the waste services and refuse collection contract.

- £90,000 by reducing road sweeping by one vehicle.

- £35,000 from reconfiguration of library services – no details available yet.

- £30,000 from halving of summer holiday play schemes.

- £55,000 from reduced costs of sickness absence.

Increased charges are also in the pipeline for trade waste, burials and other council services, plus 10p on the price of school meals.

Council leader Mel Nott said that the cabinet has worked closely with officers to set a sensible budget which can respond to the pressures facing the council, while continuing to meet the day-to-day needs of the community.

"Today, we received the welcome news that the UK is officially out of its recession, but realistically we will feel its impact for many months and even years to come," he said.

"We know that the economic downturn is likely to affect the funding which councils will receive in future years which is why we have

presented this sensible and balanced budget.

"Once again, we are underlining our commitment to the protection of frontline services."

He said he was pleased that new money had been found for important things such as looked-after children, services to the elderly and highways.

"I believe this sends out the important message that we are meeting our responsibilities to our residents from the cradle to the grave."

Coun Nott said that while this budget was affordable, the council was still facing the challenge of making substantial savings over the next two years.

"Setting the council's budget is a timely reminder that many of our residents and businesses are facing financial difficulties too.

"I want to stress how we are committed to delivering a budget in their best interests, as well as leading on and supporting a number of local initiatives designed to proactively help residents and businesses."

## Twin sister's heartbreak is revealed in victim statement

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

Nicola said she still has trouble sleeping because the night gives her, and her family, "time to reflect" on what they have all lost.

She said: "I think about what Jenna was feeling that day and feel anger at the way Jenna was taken from us."

Nicola said her parents were now more concerned for her safety and she spoke of her fears for Packer's release.

She added: "I would dread the day we ever encounter him again and being the identical twin of Jenna, makes the feeling all the more chilling."

Cardiff Crown Court heard that bright Jenna left school with 11 GCSEs, to start a career as a student nurse – but she suddenly quit to work as a barmaid in a club in Porthcawl, where she met married man Packer, who worked there as a doorman.

Prosecutor Peter Griffiths QC said: "She

was an attractive, intelligent, confident, fun-loving girl. At the night-club, they got to know each other and, to many people's surprise, because of the 28-year age difference, they began a relationship – they became an item.

"Jenna was then 19 and Packer was 47. Not surprisingly, her parents disapproved of their relationship.

"Packer's marriage broke up and Jenna and he then began living together in a flat on the seafront esplanade."

But there was a "gradual deterioration" in their two-year relationship with Packer becoming "more controlling" of behaviour.

Mr Griffiths said: "She moved back into her family home in May 2009 but, in Packer's mind, he refused to move on. He would not accept the finality of the break-up. He would not let her go.

"Packer was extremely jealous of any hint of a new man in her life."

The court heard that Jenna met a new man, Ian Walters, who was the same age. But the murder trial was told that Packer confronted her about seeing him.

The pair spent hours arguing in Packer's car before he strangled her as she sat in the front seat next to him.

Mr Griffiths said: "He

then drove to Porthcawl police station where he told the officer behind the desk what he had done.

"Officers went out of their station and saw the body of a young woman in the front seat with a blue sheet over it.

"Back inside the police station, Packer said: 'We have argued and argued all day and I strangled her.'"

The court heard he demonstrated with his hands how he had done it – but said he did not mean to kill her.

Mr Griffiths said: "Packer deliberately strangled Jenna because of his refusal to restart their relationship and because she wanted to get on with her new life and her new relationship."

"In the last week before her death, Packer phoned her 316 times and she returned 50 of those.

This showed he was not accepting the break-up and she wanted to build a new life.

"Jenna was ringing back because that's the sort of good natured person she was. She did not want to hurt Packer and did not want to ignore him – ultimately this led to her death."

Packer denied murdering Jenna, who lived with her family in North Cornelly, but he was found guilty and was

jailed for life. He was told he must serve a minimum of 18 years before being considered for release.

Judge Mr Justice John Griffith Williams told him: "Jenna undoubtedly loved you, as you loved her. But the relationship was doomed to failure because of the difference in your ages and temperaments.

"It was inevitable that her feelings towards you would change and that she would start wanting to live her own life.

"You weren't mentally ill and you weren't clinically depressed, rather you were upset at the end of a relationship and in my judgement you resented the fact Jenna wanted to live a life on her own."

"Your obsessive jealousy was evident during the relationship, but once it was over you ignored the advice of friends and Jenna's mother to seek help.

"I have no doubt that before the murder you knew full well that Jenna was never going to return to live with you."

"You took the life of a beautiful, kind-natured, fun-loving and outgoing young woman."

"The victim impact statement of Jenna's twin sister tells of the devastating loss for the family."

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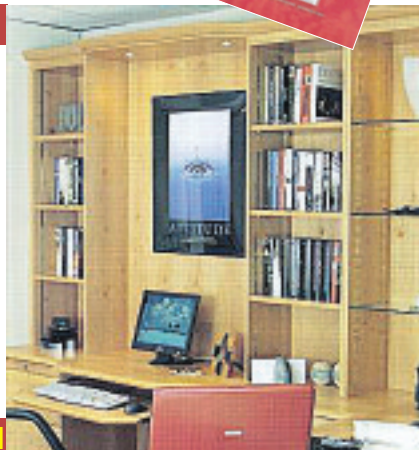


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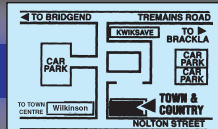


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# RENATE'S PERSONAL STORY OF HOLOCAUST HORRORS MOVES LOCAL GATHERING TO TEARS

**BRIDGEND County Borough Council marked Holocaust Memorial Day with the remarkable story of a Jewish child who escaped Prague on the eve of World War Two.**

As briefly reported in



*Harpist Angharad Roberts.*

The GEM last week, Renate Collins was just five when she left her home city on what was to be the last 'kindertransport' to ever leave the Czech capital, in June 1939.

She went on to grow up in the south Wales valleys, but tragically lost more than 60 members of her family in the Holocaust, including her parents Otto and Hilda Kress.

Renate was the council's special guest for its annual HMD ceremony which took place on Friday, January 22 ahead of the international day on January 27.

Her story moved many of the invited guests to tears as she spoke of her childhood escape and how her mother only agreed to let her go in the final minutes at the station.

Renate never saw her mother again, but she

still wears her mother and grandmother's rings which were smuggled out of a concentration camp in a loaf of bread.

As well as speaking to the invited guests, representing a wide cross-section of the community, Renate also answered questions submitted by local students.

Her childhood friend of 70 years, Pat Warren, also read *The Last Train*, a poem written by Renate's late husband David.

She was later presented with a bouquet and council plaque by students, Joe Wiltshire-Smith, a pupil at Porthcawl Comprehensive, and Mari Izzard from Ysgol Gyfun Llanhari, both members of Bridgend Youth Theatre, who were MCs for the event.

Harpist Angharad Roberts from the council's school music serv-

ice played at the start and end of the ceremony which also featured the traditional Holocaust Memorial Day 'Seven Statements of Commitment' read by prominent members of the community.

Mayor of Bridgend County Borough, Coun Jeff Tildesley, lit a candle in memory of the victims of the Holocaust and all 20th century genocides, and guests observed a respectful silence.

In his speech, Council leader Coun Mel Nott, urged communities to understand the lessons of the Holocaust and stand up to hatred by challenging exclusion, hate crime and unacceptable language.

He said: "It may seem that we cannot achieve much as individuals. But it was allowing the smallest of actions and events to go unchecked

which led to the atrocities of the last century. "By taking that message away, you will make a difference to the lives of others in our own community and across the world."

"Each year the Holocaust Memorial Day Trust chooses a particular theme, and for 2010 the theme is the 'Legacy of Hope'.

"We are being asked to listen to the voices from the Holocaust and Nazi persecution, in the hope that it will lead to a safer, inclusive society where the differences between us are respected, both today and in the future."

"Renate was just a small child when the Nazis robbed her of the opportunity to grow up in her home country with those she loved."

"Thanks to the bravery of those who recognised what was happening, Renate was able to escape and Wales gave her a new home."

"I know we will all have watched programmes and documentaries about the Holocaust and some of you will have had lessons in school about this terrible period in history."

"But today, we are seeing and hearing from a person who lived through those events and suffered the greatest of losses. Our challenge is to make the experience and words of Renate and other victims and survivors of the Holocaust a meaningful part of our future."



*ABOVE: Joe Wiltshire-Smith, Renate Collins, Coun Jeff Tildesley and Mari Izzard.*



*ABOVE : Ogmere AM and MP Janice Gregory and Huw Irranca-Davies were also there to observe Holocaust Memorial Day.*

● Exact figures are unknown, but it is estimated the kindertransports saved around 10,000 children, most of them Jewish, from Germany, Austria, Czechoslovakia and Poland.



*ABOVE: Coun Mel Nott, First Minister Carwyn Jones, Coun Jeff Tildesley, Renate Collins and her son Paul, Pam Warren and Jo Farrar (BCBC chief executive).*

welcome

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## Lecturers battle to awards ceremony

**THREE engineering lecturers at Bridgend College and Robert Jones, head of school, engineering, battled through the cold and snow drifts to make their way to the Royal Society in London earlier this month for Innovisions 2010, New Engineering Foundation awards and annual conference.**

The event was hosted by Maggie Philbin, radio and television presenter, and David Kidney MP, Minister for Energy and Climate Change.

The New Engineering Foundation is a grant-awarding charity that promotes the development of vocational education in science, engineering and technology.

The Industrial Fellowship scheme provides bursaries for further education lecturers to spend time in local companies or research organisations in support of their professional development, enhancing classroom learning, and encouraging knowledge transfer within the local business community.

The annual awards



*Left to right: David Brooks, Samuel James, Justin Miles.*

ceremony recognises the dedication of both teachers and employers in pursuit of these goals. Carl Bickle, Mike Donnelly and Tony James have each undertaken a three-week

industrial placement that has allowed them to enhance and update skills in modern industrial processes, which can be developed into the learning activities to ensure topics are current and meet the needs of industry.

A college spokesperson said: "These new skills will also help ensure that training and assessment processes provide students with the skills needed to succeed."

"Carl Bickle has been working at Corus Strip Products in Port Talbot,

which will allow Bridgend College to develop new apprenticeship routes to fulfil future plant requirements in Process Control and High Voltage systems."

"Mike Donnelly has spent three weeks in RWE npower's Aberthaw Power Station."

"Tony James has enjoyed three weeks in the Ford Engine Plant in Bridgend to gain a working knowledge of new engine manufacturing processes at this advanced manufacturing facility."

"All agree the industrial placement scheme has enhanced and updated their skills, and provided an excellent working knowledge of these employers."



# Hidden truths behind tragedy of Afghanistan

**THE eyes of the people of Pakistan and Afghanistan will be on London this week as the international conference discussing the way forward for Afghanistan takes place.**

I returned on Saturday from visits to Pakistan and Afghanistan with the Defence Select Committee, where we met political, military and civilian society leaders.

Ahead of the conference, it is important to put the current situation and progress in Afghanistan into some context, and highlight a few hidden truths about this war-scarred country.

The political history of Afghanistan during the 20th century is both stormy and complex.

King Zahir Shah ruled Afghanistan for 40 years from 1973, a golden age of democracy for the country.

An army coup, prepared in Kabul and under the direct supervision of Russian military advisers, took place in 1973, promising a fast and revolutionary development of the country, based on democracy and socialism.

In 1977, President Daoud decided to end relationships with the Soviet Union and tried to take Afghanistan closer to the West, and the Middle-East.

This prompted the 1978 Soviet invasion in which air attacks killed President Daoud and his family and a Moscow-supported government took power.

By the end of 1979,

the country was in chaos with Afghan Mujahedeen fighters clashing with Soviet military.

Operating from bases in remote mountainous regions with support from the West, China and Pakistan, the Mujahedeen were able to fight Soviet troops to a standstill.

Years of war between Soviet troops and Mujahedeen inflicted enormous damage on Afghanistan's infrastructure.

An estimated five million Afghans fled, mostly to Pakistan as refugees, where many began to attend Islamic religious schools.

It was at these schools that a new political movement was born – the Taliban (roughly translated as 'students of religion').

In February 1989, the last of the Soviet troops pulled out of the country.

In April 1992, the Mujahedeen took control of the country but disparate factions within the Mujahedeen alliance were frequently at loggerheads and their arguments gradually came to be settled with the use of military force.

During this period, an estimated 50,000 people were killed and much of the capital, Kabul, destroyed. With discreet backing from Pakistan, Taliban fighters gradually pushed the old Mujahedeen forces out.

By September 1996, the Taliban controlled most of the country, including Kabul. The majority of the population, tired of death, destruction and lawlessness initially viewed the Taliban as a positive change.

Sharia Islamic law governed Taliban decisions and edicts were dispensed by the Mullahs and enforced by the police.

Under the Taliban's rigid social code, all girls were forbidden to attend school, women were virtually confined to their homes, and women's healthcare was left in shreds.

Television, videos and music were banned; men were forced to grow beards, with severe punishment for failure to follow devout religious practices.

The Taliban's support for and sheltering of Al Qaeda after the 9/11 led to UN Resolution 1386 for the deployment of troops to provide security and reconstruction of Afghanistan.

The Taliban's shocking attacks in Kabul on the Monday I arrived in the country, took place just as new cabinet members were taking their oath of office following a second round of elections.

During my visit to Kabul, Kandahar, Lashkar Gha and Camp Bastion, I saw the work being undertaken by the 42 nation ISAF (International Security and Assistance Forces) of which Britain is the second highest contributor of troops.

The majority of our forces are based in Southern Helmand province where much of the worst fighting is taking place. Our bases were impressive, well led, well structured, well resourced and well equipped. I will write more about them in a later article.

Now is the time to focus on the London

## WESTMINSTER NOTEBOOK

**Bridgend MP MADELEINE MOON is writing an exclusive monthly report from Westminster for The GEM.**



conference, taking place at the beginning of a critical year for Afghanistan. Since the arrival of the new US military leader General Stanley McChrystal, and the endorsement of his new approach to tackling the insurgency, ISAF and the Afghan and governments are at a crossroads.

Failure in Afghanistan will mean failure for Pakistan, increased instability across the region and failure for NATO, the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation, the cornerstone of western security since the Second World War.

We know that Afghanistan, a once democratic country, has been ravished and largely destroyed by war. We know it has huge untapped human and natural resources that could make it once again self sustaining and responsible for its own internal and national security.

Achieving this will mean development of Afghanistan's civil infrastructure, schools, hospitals and roads, the building of governance capacity and tackling corruption, as well as the growth of the country's national security forces.

During our visit, we met members of Afghanistan's civil society working to build internal structures and organisations, often with the assistance of our own Department for International Development (DfID).

The UK's joint military and DfID Provincial Reconstruction Team working in Helmand was recognised, in our meeting with General Rodriguez, the Commander of ISAF's Joint Command, as working especially well with Afghans in building local capacity and infrastructure.

We saw the training and development of the Afghan National Army

and the increasing responsibility they will play in jointly planned and manned operations.

The training of the Afghan National Police needs to be improved and their role more clearly defined, but this need was recognised by everyone we met.

Tackling corruption and strengthening political structures across the country was high on everyone's agenda. As was the issue of reconciliation and reintegration of those who are currently part of the insurgency.

Who and why people are part of the insurgency are critical issues for success for the Afghan government. Some are fighting because of poverty, some for revenge, some for faith and ideology.

Many can and would wish to return to a normal life in a stable and secure Afghanistan run by and for the Afghans. Whether this can be achieved will be part of the vital issues discussed at the London conference.

## BOSCH: Why leave the UK?

**IT is no surprise, but nevertheless galling, that Bosch have decided to relocate to low-wage Hungary – but it would be enlightening to know what incentives to do so have been proffered by the Hungarian government.**

Clearly, our own incentives were sufficiently attractive to bring the company to Wales initially, but now these have been dissipated, Bosch is set to exploit new opportunities.

When the possibility of the company coming to Miskin was first debated, and Bosch were seeking the support of the Vale Council, I was a Vale councillor, and clearly remember the company proudly detailing its manufacturing history – with one glaring omission, ie the years between 1939 and 1945.

I wonder why? Can the company now be more transparent and let us know what offers and inducements have been made by Hungary?

**Christopher Short**

## NEWS FROM MAENDY YFC

# All eyes now turn towards county drama competition

**THE festive period was a particularly busy time for Maendy YFC – including an evening of carol singing around Ystradowen.**

The club would like to extend its sincere thanks to Beverley and Mervyn Lewis of Long Acre; Hilary and Brian Rees of Pleasant View; Liz and Graham Jervis of Windy Ridge; and Julie and Mark Jarvis of Gelli Goch Farm, who all welcomed the singing members into their homes and provided refreshments – not forgetting kind donations for the Welsh Kidney Foundation.

A total of £52 was raised. Food and drinks at The White Lion

rounded off the night, where there was a lovely atmosphere among family and friends.

The club's focus is now set on the fast approaching annual Glamorgan YFC drama competition, to be held at The Princess Royal Theatre on February 11-12 (6.30pm start).

Tickets can be purchased from Heather Sedgebeer at the Glamorgan YFC office, Pencoeed College, telephone 01656 864488, or email Glamorgan@yfc-wales.org.uk.

This year, Maendy have two teams competing and practices have been going smoothly, despite a few disruptions due to the snow!

The annual club dress rehearsal and parents evening will take place on Sunday, February 7 at

Peterston-super-Ely village hall. Doors open at 7pm, curtain up 7.30pm.

This will be a chance for friends and family to have a sneak preview at Maendy's productions.

There will be light refreshments to be held at the Motor Neurone Disease Association.

For more information, contact the club chairman on 07841 486440.

If that isn't enough to keep everyone busy, January 31 is the senior debating and junior public speaking competitions at Pencoeed College.

This competition had to be postponed from its original date due to the snow, but members have used the time to prepare their speeches and are now ready to go! **HL**

## Making the most out of your garden in winter

**IT was good to see president Margaret Batten back at the January meeting, following her recent illness.**

She opened the meeting and thanked members for all the cards and good wishes they sent during her recent spell in hospital.

The Christmas dinner in December had been a great success and all enjoyed an excellent meal provided by Jane Morgan.

Carol singing was led by Olga Wolfenden and Val Manning. Members were

## NEWS FROM MERTHYR MAWR WI

reminded of the half yearly council meeting in April, when the speaker will be Ruth Jones.

They were pleased to hear that a team from Glamorgan Federation has reached the competition round of BBC television's *Eggheads* and delighted that one of the team, Gwerfil Gardner, comes from Merthyr Mawr WI.

Members are looking forward to seeing them on television around July time. Following the business part of the

evening, they welcomed Kevin Thomas from Brynethin nursery, who gave an interesting and entertaining talk on winter gardening.

With the use of slides, he explained how much interest could be found in a winter garden through good use of suitable plants – such as Daphne, skimmia, hellebores – and using plants and shrubs with interesting shapes, stems and bark. Joan Kelly gave the vote of thanks.

The next meeting on February 3, at Ewenny Community Hall, will be a practical evening of painting, led by Alice Coulter and Joan Glascoe. **FC**

## Poets' London reading for Haiti disaster appeal

**PORTHCAWL poet Robert Minhinick is one of 20 poets who will appear at a special event in London in aid of the Haiti appeal.**

The Poet Laureate, Carol Ann Duffy, and Poetry Live have invited 20 leading UK poets to perform at Westminster Central Hall on Saturday, January 30, at 2.30pm in a fundraising event for the people of Haiti.

Also appearing are: Roger McGough, Andrew Motion, John Agard, Dannie Abse, Brian Patten, Gillian Clarke, Imtiaz Dharker, Grace Nichols, Elaine Feinstein, Daljit Nagra, Ian Duhig, Lachlan Mackinnon, Owen Sheers, Glyn Maxwell, Jo Shapcott, Robin Robertson, Colette Bryce, and Maura Dooley, along with the musicians John

Sampson and Andy Roberts.

All proceeds will go to the Disasters Emergency Committee's Haiti Earthquake

Appeal. Tickets are £10. Telephone 01497 822629 or go to [www.poetryliveforhaiti.org](http://www.poetryliveforhaiti.org) to book tickets.

## Park Slip euphoria must be put on hold!

**RESIDENTS of Kenfig Hill and surrounding communities, who have been celebrating the decision of the Welsh Assembly Government to reject plans to extend the Park Slip opencast site, have put the champagne on ice.**

Celtic Energy has decided to seek a judicial review in the High Court of the decision by WAG to reject an appeal lodged by the company against the decision by planners from Bridgend and Neath Port Talbot councils to reject the

application. The company, which operates the existing opencast mine, wanted to extend it towards Margam, so that it can extract a further 1.7 million tonnes of coal over five years.

However, there was strong opposition from residents of the Crown Road area of Kenfig Hill, which is nearest the mine, as well as others living in Penybryn, Bryndu, Cefn Cribwr and Pyle.

The area has been subjected to successive waves of opencast mining, going back to the 1940s.



ABOVE: A training camp for the Afghan National Army (ANA)



ABOVE: The Defence Select Committee met with members of the Afghan government.



# 'Money found for facility' £600,000 CASH INJECTION SAVES MAESTEG SWIMMING POOL

MAESTEG swimming pool is to be saved from permanent closure by an immediate £600,000 injection of cash for essential repairs.

BCBC's Labour cabinet agreed on Tuesday to find the money from its budget to upgrade the filtration plant and other electrical and mechanical equipment.

The cabinet received an emergency report stating that the pool had to be closed on Monday because of expert advice about the safety of pool users.

Coun Leader Mel Nott said that it decided to act quickly and decisively: "We recognise that this is a popular pool and the community will be looking for reassurance."

"We asked for an emergency report to be presented and have agreed that the authority will make an investment of up to £600,000 to make these essential upgrades."

"We do not make decisions about investing or

cutting resources lightly but, as a cabinet, we are agreed that this is an important facility for the Llynfi Valley and the repairs will be made."

Maesteg Town Council voted last week to set aside £35,000 to pay towards any repairs to the pool, if asked to contribute.

Coun Nott said that the pool will have to remain closed until the upgrades are carried out but he said work will be done as quickly as possible.

He said that Ynysawdre Pool could be used in the meantime but added: "I fully recognise that the closure will be inconvenient in the short term, but we are simply not prepared to risk the health of users."

"While the pool has been operating safely until now, the system is no longer equipped to cope and the water might be contaminated in the future. This is not a risk we are prepared to take."

The pool dates from the 1930s, when it was built as an open air pool but it was enclosed in the

1960s and underwent a major refit in the 1990s.

The news is likely to come as a huge relief to residents of the valley and pool users who had feared that the pool would be closed on health grounds.

One of those campaigning to keep it open is pool user Maureen Edwards, of Commercial Street: "I am delighted by this news," she said.

"This pool is essential and is well used by all age groups within the community."

"People were feeling very strongly about this and the council would have had one devil of a fight if they had tried to close it down."

"Everyone was determined that we would not lose our pool, despite what happened in Ogmogre and Garw, where they were closed."

The cabinet has managed to find this money against a backdrop of making cuts of £2.4m in the council budget in the new financial year.

## NEW YOUTH CENTRE FOR PENCOED

PENCOED is to get a new youth centre - plans have been approved by Bridgend planners for the borough youth service to install a modular building on land at the rear of Heol Las.

The scheme is being supported by Pencoed Town Council as a means of addressing youth annoyance and anti-social behaviour.

The building will be sited in the corner of an existing playground and open space with access from an existing car park at the back of Penprysg Road.

It will provide young people with a main hall, computer room, kitchen-diner, quiet room plus offices, toilets and storage.

It will cater for young people aged from eight to 25 and will be run by the Youth Service, which will organise programmes and activities.

The wider community will also be involved. The centre will be opened during the day and on four evenings a week up until 9pm. It could also open on weekends occasionally.

The day time activities will include accredited training programmes for young people provided by different groups, and in the evening there will be cooking, work-

shops, sports, internet and computer activities, music workshops, dance, arts and crafts.

Police have pointed out a number of disadvantages with this location including poor natural surveillance from surrounding properties, many escape routes for people who have committed an offence, no lighting or CCTV, the need for security lighting on the building and a possible perimeter fence.

Objections were lodged by some residents. They say that the existing play area is valued by local children who have few safe areas in which to play.

Children play football there and have no alternative sites.

Another said that the site was unsuitable and the centre should go elsewhere.

Residents fear an increase in vandalism and other problems when youngsters leave the building at closing time.

Planning officer David Llewellyn said that the facility was centrally located and met criteria laid down for such developments.

He said that while an audit of recreational space in Pencoed showed that there was a lack of outdoor playing space, it was felt that this facility would provide complementary facilities.

## Council denies that school will be demolished

ALARM bells were set ringing by an article in a newspaper (not The GEM) which claimed that Ogmogre Comprehensive School was to be closed and demolished.

Members of Ogmogre Community Council were concerned about the story and asked clerk Louvain Lake to investigate.

In her report back to the council, Mrs Lake said that she had been in touch with officers at Bridgend County Borough Council, who had categorically stated that the article was untrue.

"BCBC has denied that there are any plans to demolish the school, once it is closed," she said.

"I am told that no decisions about the long-term future have been taken and there will be full consultation with us and with the community before anything is decided," she told The GEM this week.

"They have a lot of ideas about alternative uses of these buildings."

Ynysawdre and Ogmogre Comprehensive schools are being merged and a new Gateway to the Valleys comprehensive school is to be developed on the site at Ynysawdre, which will include land freed up when Archbishop McGrath RC Comprehensive moves to another site at Brackla.

## Developer agrees £32,000 payout

THE developer of new houses at Ffordr yr Eglwys, North Cornelly, is to pay £32,626 towards the cost of providing extra classroom space to cater for extra children in the village.

The developer - Mr D. Edwards of Devon - is to pay the money to Bridgend County Borough Council before any work starts on site.

He will be required to sign a Section 106 agreement and the sum will be index linked from last September.

**Read your GEM  
online: [bridgend-today.co.uk](http://bridgend-today.co.uk) or  
[porthcawl-today.co.uk](http://porthcawl-today.co.uk)**

# What will Bosch do now with its 200 acres of prime land?

AS negotiations continue in an attempt to persuade Bosch to keep a manufacturing capability in the Vale, the scale of its commercial nest egg became clear this week.

The company is taking the work done at its Miskin plant to Hungary, with the loss of 900 jobs, and last week, The GEM asked the question: "How much land in the Vale does Bosch own?"

This week, the company issued a statement revealing that the existing plant takes up a mere five per cent of Bosch's landholding.

The statement said: "The land that Bosch occupies is owned by Bosch. It is approximately 200 acres of land in total and the plant facilities occupy only 10 acres of this site."

"There are no current plans for the site as the final decision to phase out production of the plant must be agreed by the Bosch board."

In last week's GEM article, the former deputy leader of the Vale Council, Mr Tony Williams, said that the now-defunct South Glamorgan County Council had stepped in and granted planning permission on at least 164 acres of that land.

In the company statement, Bosch confirmed that there had been "strong interest" in the land from developers.

The statement said: "Bosch understands the strong interest in the land as it would be ideal for future development in the region."

"Due to its prime location, we have already been contacted by a large number of interested parties. Bosch will inform all relevant parties in due course once a decision on the

## REPORT by GEM STAFF

future of site or a potential sale is made."

The news that the land could be sold for development came as no surprise to Mr Williams.

He said: "Everyone knows about the cash inducements that were paid to Bosch to get them to come, but the land deal has hardly been mentioned."

"However, I can only speculate on the value of this 200-acre nest egg."

"I strongly believe that the value of this land should be a factor in any compensation deal agreed with workers who have lost their jobs."

## WORKERS STILL HOPE

Meanwhile, unions and workers at the plant were hoping that a last-minute deal might be reached.

Colin Tucker, who has worked at Bosch for 15 years and is on the plant council, a go-between body for the workers and management, said the employees still hoped their jobs might be saved.

He said: "Talks on the future will continue until the end of February and people feel in a state of limbo until they know what is going to happen."

"Last week, I went to the Assembly and met the First Minister, Carwyn Jones, and was pleased to see how clued up he was on what was

happening.

"A lot of questions have been raised by people as to what can be done at this late stage."

Mr Tucker said there was still the chance that Bosch may want to make use of the skills at the Miskin plant.

He explained: "There are other divisions at Bosch and maybe work could be provided by one of them."

The Vale's AM, Jane Hutt, told The GEM: "Over the past year, I have been meeting with the plant managers and the workforce plant council."

"We offered the management every assistance from the Assembly Government - Proact, support for research and development, urging them to bring new product lines to Wales."

"At every meeting, we were told by management they did not want or need our assistance and that it was 'out of their hands'."

"Last week, I met with the plant council, with their union representatives and a statement was made by the Deputy First Minister in the Senedd."

"We have not given up and are making further representations to Bosch chiefs in Stuttgart," the AM vowed.

## Petition against camper vans goes to council

A PETITION opposed to plans to set up camper van facilities in Rest Bay has been presented to Bridgend County Borough Council by Porthcawl Civic Trust Society.

The petition was signed by 769 people and was organised in the wake of publicity in the summer about council plans to set up a facility at the car park in Rest Bay.

That proposal was deferred for a further report to other options.

In a letter to the council, society secretary Caroline Vaughan said the society believed that the ideal site for such a facility was the former Sandy Bay caravan park, which is owned by the council.

Mrs Vaughan said that longer term plans to build on Sandy Bay were

not viable during the current recession so the camper van site could be provided on part of the site.

She pointed out that the council is only proceeding at the moment with the provision of a supermarket under the Porthcawl regeneration scheme. All other phases are on hold.

She added that when the cabinet considers its position on camper van facilities, it should exclude Rest Bay from the options because the site is too far from facilities in the town, is located near a landscape conservation area and such a development would blight an area of wild, natural beauty.

She also asked if the council needed to provide facilities at all as a private site is available at Nottage.

The cabinet is expected to receive a further report on this shortly.

## Go-ahead for Sarn park and ride extension

PLANNING consent has been granted for the park and ride facility at Sarn to be enlarged.

The existing car park will be increased in size to accommodate 36 cars, instead of the 15 at present.

The car park, at Heol Persondy, will also have two bus bays so that integrated public transport can be provided.

A report to the development control committee stated that the car park was in a good strategic location near the M4. It had the potential to attract passengers from surrounding areas who are heading for Bridgend or further afield.

Sarn is served by the Maesteg Rail Line which has an hourly service to Cardiff in one direction or Maesteg in the other.

The site will have improved CCTV coverage and better lighting to discourage crime and provide a safer and pleasant environment for users.

But nearby residents were not impressed with the scheme. Mr L.P. Rowland of The Croft said that the present car park was used after dark by youngsters practising handbrake turns.

He said a larger car park would increase this dangerous activity and increase disturbance, noise and nuisance.

Neighbours Mr and Mrs L Roche also objected on similar grounds and expressed fears that the car park will attract more young people at night as it is already a meeting place.

They also feel that the extension is unnecessary as the present car park is rarely congested.

## X3 bus reinstated

THERE is good news for bus passengers in Maesteg with the reinstatement of the popular X3 bus from the town to Swansea.

The bus will be coming back as an hourly service from February 21, having been axed before Christmas by First Cymru.

However, a petition was organised by Maesteg Town Council that was signed by hundreds of local people calling for its reinstatement.

First Cymru have said that the bus will run via Port Talbot as before.

## Paint thrown on parked cars

PORHCRAWL police are appealing for information about an incident on South Street between 4am-4.30am on Saturday (January 23) when white paint was thrown over several parked cars and three males were seen running from the scene.

Contact Inspector Alan James at Porthcawl police station on 101, or anonymously via Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.





Glamorgan GEM

# Food for Thought



## AT YOUR SERVICE!

### Coffee Zone makes a welcome entrance

**THE** Business Centre in Barry has announced the opening of an in-house café called The Coffee Zone.

The centre has made this new investment to provide an additional much-needed service for its clients.

However, it is already drawing in members of the public and other people from the Ty Verlon Estate, who are delighted to have somewhere providing food and hot drinks locally.

The Coffee Zone is being run by Dawn Lee and her daughter Paige. Dawn has more than 20 years' experience in the



catering trade and is "very excited" to be providing the new service.

Coffee Zone is open from 8.30am-3.30pm Monday-Friday.

Contact Dawn on 01446 704428 for further details, or to place an order.

**ABOVE:** Dawn and Paige are ready to take your orders at The Coffee Zone!

## Finnegans runner-up in top UK-wide competition Local chip shop hits the heights!

A LOCAL chippie is celebrating hitting the heights – after winning second prize in a national competition to find the best fish and chip shop in the UK.

Finnegans' Fish Bar was crowned the second best fish and chip shop in the UK at the national 'Fish & Chip Shop of the Year' competition 2009/2010, organised by Seafish.

The owners, Huw and Sarah Jones, were presented with the award, by TV chef Aldo Zilli, at a ceremony in the Riverbank Park Plaza Hotel in London last week.

Huw and Sarah have three branches, one in Broadlands, Bridgend, one in Porthcawl, and another in Port Talbot.

The Porthcawl branch claims Ruth Jones of *Gavin and Stacey* as a regular visitor, and Michael Sheen has also popped in!

Huw and Sarah were awarded second place after a rigorous judging

process, which included a customer vote, taste tests, two intense rounds of shop inspections and a presentation to a panel of industry experts.

Shops are strictly judged not only on the quality of their fish and chips, but on all areas of the business including responsible seafood sourcing, customer service, food hygiene, staff training and community spirit.

Huw said: "We are over the moon to win the second spot. There are not many shops in Wales that can say they serve some of the best fish and chips in the UK."

"We'll keep improving the standards of our shop and, hopefully, we'll be back here next year to walk away with the top trophy."

"I'd like to say a big thank you to my staff and loyal customers who helped us reach this stage of the competition."

The winner was a Scottish-Italian fish restaurant, Atlantic Fast Food in Coatbridge,

Glasgow, with the Great British Eatery in Birmingham coming in third place.

Aldo Zilli, compere of the competition and seafood restaurateur, said: "The high standards of our fish and chip shops rival the top restaurants in the country."

"The best shop owners work hard to deliver outstanding quality by using the finest ingredients and a responsible attitude to the sourcing of fish."

Nikki Hawkins, the competition project manager, said: "Despite the credit crunch, people still want to enjoy small luxuries."

"In fact, 183 million portions of fish and chips were sold last year alone. A national institution, fish and chips has survived the test of time and will be around for many years to come."

The national 'Fish & Chip Shop of the Year' competition has been run by Seafish for 22 years.

A Seafish spokeswoman said: "In that time, fish and chip shops have changed dramatically, with many now offering different varieties of fish such as pollack, coley, and hake."

"Modern frying methods and state of the art frying ranges also mean that fish and chips is one of the healthiest takeaway meals containing less salt, a third less calories and more than 40 per cent less fat than other takeaways."

## Rotary's star young chefs in battle for the big prize!

**RIGHT:** Rotary clubs do their bit to promote excellence, and a popular example is the 'Young Chef' competition. Barry Rotary staged their competition recently, and it was won by Jordan Clarke (far right) with Sophie Thomas the runner-up. (See next week's GEM for a report).



## Healthy eating —Italian style!

**LIGHT, tasty and using olive oil to its best advantage – that's the Italian way to healthy eating.**

Now, olive oil specialist Filippo Berio, has put together some great Mediterranean dishes to put you on the right track!

**Toasted mozzarella and tomato sandwich**

Preparation time: 10 minutes, cooking time: 5-10 minutes (serves 2).

Two tomatoes sliced; four tbsp Filippo Berio Extra Virgin Olive oil; 1 tsp balsamic vinegar; a few shredded basil leaves; salt and freshly ground black pepper; four thick slices of bread; one clove garlic halved; 150g mozzarella cheese, sliced;

**Step one:** Place the tomatoes on a plate, sprinkle over 2 tbsp of the oil, the vinegar and basil. Season well and set aside.

**Step two:** Rub the garlic all over the slices of bread, then drizzle half the remaining oil over one side of the bread slices. Cook on a preheated griddle pan for 2 minutes or until toasted.

**Step three:** Place toasted side up on a board and top two slices with the tomatoes and sliced mozzarella. Place the remaining bread, toasted side down on the filling. Drizzle half the oil over and cook on the griddle for 2 minutes until toasted.

**Step four:** Drizzle the remaining oil on the untoasted side, turn over and cook for a further 2 minutes until the bread is golden brown and the cheese beginning to melt. Serve immediately.

**Pan fried pork with Tuscan beans**

Preparation time: 15 minutes (serves four).

Cooking time: 1 hour 5 tbsp Filippo Berio

Olive oil; 4 pork loin steaks, approx 150g (5oz) ea; 3 shallots, peeled and finely chopped; 1/2 red pepper, deseeded and finely chopped; 2 garlic cloves, finely chopped; 2 x 410g cans cannellini beans, drained; 150ml (1/4 pt) dry white wine; 300ml (1/2 pt) chicken or vegetable stock; 4 or 5 sage leaves, chopped;

**Step one:** Heat 2 tbsps of the olive oil in a large frying pan over medium/high heat, add the pork loin steaks and cook for about 12 minutes until deep golden brown on both sides, prop the loin steaks on the side of the pan so the edges brown during next step.

**Step two:** Add another tablespoon of oil to the pan and then the shallots, red pepper and garlic and cook over a medium heat for about five minutes until softened. Pour in the wine and bring to the boil.

**Step three:** Add the cannellini beans, stock and sage, place the pork chops among the beans, cover and simmer for 15-20 minutes. Remove the lid and simmer a further 15 minutes or until the stock has become syrupy and the chops are tender.

**Step four:** Remove the lid; add the remaining olive oil. Season if desired and serve.

## Restaurants unite for Haiti appeal

A NUMBER of Vale restaurants made their contribution to the Haiti appeal last night (Wednesday) by donating 50 per cent of the evening's takings to the cause.

The GEM understands that the fundraising idea may be extended, and restaurants that do so will be displaying the Haiti Earthquake (Islamic Relief) poster.

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## Tiffin Rasoi's Haiti evening

A CHARITY night in aid of the Haiti earthquake victims is being held at Tiffin Rasoi this Sunday, January 31 from 5pm-11pm.

Tiffin Rasoi will donate 50 per cent of its proceeds to the Haiti appeal.

Tiffin Rasoi, 37 Holton Road, Barry, telephone 01446 743030/721100; www.tiffinrasoi.com

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# Out and About with The GEM

## Music in the Vale proves a stepping stone to stardom!

RECENTLY, Music in the Vale found itself represented both in the Gordon Theatre and on the Glanfa stage at the Wales Millennium Centre.

Leigh Rhiannon Coggins, a runner-up in

the 2007 singing competition, was performing in the musical *Les Misérables* in the Gordon Theatre, and is also understudying *Cosette*.

Just prior to the matinee performance, Music in the Vale provided a full one-hour free concert to a very large and appreciative audience in the Glanfa foyer.

The finalists of Music in the Vale's 2009 annual competition enjoyed this first opportunity to perform to a large, enthusiastic audience.

These young musi-

cians, with either classic, folk or music theatre pieces, all amazed the audience with their high standards of performance.

Music in the Vale is providing two similar opportunities for their finalists – Saturday, April 24 (1.15pm-2.15pm) and Sunday, June 27 (1pm-2pm).

For more information about Music in the Vale, visit the website [musicinthevale.org.uk](http://musicinthevale.org.uk) or telephone the secretary on 01446 771318.

## Forum's new website

The Vale Older People's Strategy Forum has launched a new website.

The forum has a membership of more than 600 people aged 50+ that either live or work in the Vale, and the new website covers many areas of interest, including housing, transport, health, and age discrimination.

Jane Weldon, the website administrator, said: "There are many articles and helpful links, including how to find out if you are entitled to cold weather payments. Go to our website at [www.vale-opf.org.uk](http://www.vale-opf.org.uk)"

## Comedian really suffers for his art!

AWARD-WINNING comedian Rhod Gilbert paid a special visit to the Vale Council's visible services department recently, as part of his new series for BBC One Wales – *Rhod Gilbert's Work Experience* – which sees him step well and truly out of his comfort zone.

Over the course of his visit, Rhod took on jobs with the council's refuse team, spent the day at the civic amenity site

and patrolled with the enforcement team, to find out just how difficult an average day can be.

At first, Rhod was tasked with becoming a bin man, meaning very early starts, lots of walking and having to face some rather unpleasant sights and smells along the way – something that Rhod admits he wasn't exactly relishing the thought of.

Things didn't get off to a great start, though, as Rhod turned up late for his first shift!

## Older People's Forum hosts information day

A MORNING of refreshments, information and discussion is planned for Thursday, February 25, when the Vale Older People's Strategy Forum hosts an information and coffee morning in Barry.

The event will be held at Barry Library, King Square, between 10am-12pm and will provide an opportunity for the forum to recruit new members and provide guests with information on health and wellbeing.

There will be information stands offering

advice on different topics such as Age Concern/Help the Aged welfare rights, advocacy and good neighbourhood scheme, TeleV personal security systems, Health through Warmth and much more.

Representatives from the forum will also be on hand to talk about work achieved so far.

The forum welcomes new members so long as they are aged over 50 and live or work in the Vale.

For further information, contact Nisha Shukla, participation and involvement officer, on 01446 704857 or email [nshukla@vale-of-glamorgan.gov.uk](mailto:nshukla@vale-of-glamorgan.gov.uk).

## Councillor's plea for more allotment space

LOCAL councillor, Rob Curtis, has requested a report for the economy and environment scrutiny committee on how the Vale Council can supply more allotment space to meet public demand and help protect the environment.

He explained: "Owning and tending an allotment can have

many benefits, including exercise, good wholesome healthy food and also help protect our environment in the process.

"The waiting list for allotments in the Vale has increased massively over the past couple of years.

"I believe the Vale Council should be doing its utmost to create new allotment space."

## PACT meetings

CASTLELAND PACT public meeting will be held at The Civic Offices, Holton Road, Barry on Monday, February 8, at 7pm. BUTTRILLS PACT, The Phillip John Community Room, Barry Library, King Square, Wednesday, February 10, at 6.30pm. GIBBONSDOWN PACT, The Community First Office, Aberaeron Close, Barry, Tuesday, February 16, at 2pm. ST BRIDES MAJOR PACT, St Brides Major Church Hall on Wednesday, February 3, at 6pm.

YSTRADOWEN Coffee & Chat, at The White Lion on Tuesday, February 9, at 11.30am. RHOOSE PACT, Celtic Way Community Centre on Tuesday, February 16, at 7pm. LLANDOW/ EWENNY PACT, Ewenny Village Hall on Wednesday, February 17, at 7pm.

ST HILARY Coffee & Chat meeting, St Hilary Village Hall on Friday, February 19, at 11am. SULLY PACT, the Jubilee Hall on Thursday, February 11, at 8pm.

## Barry chef rejoins Welsh culinary team

BARRY chef Lee Jaynes is a key member of the Welsh National Culinary Team, as they prepare to compete on home soil, before flying to take on the best in Asia this spring.

The team has been invited to compete for the first time at the FFA Culinary Challenge in Singapore, hailed as Asia's most established culinary competition, from April 15-25.

Lee, originally from Barry, emigrated to live in Australia last year and is looking forward to meeting up again with his former team-mates.



Lee Jaynes returns to the Welsh team for the Singapore competition.

The Welsh team warms up for the Singapore event by competing on home soil against Celtic cousins Scotland and Ireland in the Battle for the Dragon contest during the Welsh International Culinary championships at Coleg Llandrillo Cymru, Rhos-on-Sea from February 16-18.

## Tory AM's surgery

DAVID MELDING, the Conservative Assembly Member for South Wales Central region, will be holding an advice surgery tomorrow (Friday, January 29) at 29, High Street, Barry, between 10am-11.30am.

No appointments are necessary and all are welcome to attend.

HAITI APPEAL A BRING & Buy sale is being held in Llandow Village Hall on Saturday, January 30, between 10am-2pm in aid of the Haiti earthquake appeal.

Helpers needed; telephone 01656 890737/890513/890532.

TABLE TOP A TABLE top sale will be held in Holy Cross Church, Cowbridge, on Saturday, February 6 from 10am-12.30pm.

New and unused goods and bric-a-brac; entry 50p. Proceeds in aid of the restoration fund.

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Anybody who wants clothes collecting, please contact the above telephone numbers

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## SIXTH FORM OPEN EVENING

An open evening for students considering taking their AS/A2 Level studies will be held in the Sixth Form on Thursday, 4th February between 4.30 pm and 6.30 pm

## Andrew RT Davies AM

Welsh Conservative Assembly Member for South Wales Central



If you would like to attend an advice surgery, please contact:

Tel: 02920 898523

Office: 29 High Street, Barry, CF62 9EA.

Next surgery: Friday 5th February, 10.30-11.30am



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The ultimate achievement can be recognised at national level. The winners of the South Wales event will be nominated into the LABC National 'Building Awards', which will include nominations from most of the local authorities throughout Wales and England, in London next October.





The Vale of Glamorgan Council **Building Excellence Awards 2010****Category 1 - Nomination for Extensions & Alterations****The Old Vicarage, Pendoylan**Applicant: **Mr. G. Davies**Contractor: **Martin Jones**

This extension to a substantial detached dwelling comprises a covered courtyard entrance, a large garage and fitness suite on ground level with a self-contained granny annexe at first floor level.

The topography of the site required significant ground-works and the construction of a large mass concrete block retaining wall for the garage element to be built into the adjacent ground. The garage opens up into the large terraced courtyard with an open air swimming pool.

The fitness suite also benefits from open access to the courtyard, whilst the granny annexe, situated above the garage area, is accessed from the rear garden level, and provides unobstructed views over the surrounding countryside.

The design of the fitness suite incorporates an oak framed roof construction which was replicated in the covered courtyard entrance. The attention to detail was reflected in all other areas of construction and finishes, and has resulted in a superb extension well worthy of nomination.

The contractor maintained regular contact with the Building Control Department to ensure all relevant elements of work were inspected prior to covering over.

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**Ty Cwar, Penylan Rd, St Brides Major**Applicant: **Mr. & Mrs. Dalton**Agent: **Barry Mayled**Contractor: **Gwyn G. Jones & Sons Ltd**

The project consisted of a two storey extension and a first floor extension including new dormer roof extensions, built in traditional construction to match existing elevations, incorporating high levels of thermal and acoustic insulation.

The roof construction is sympathetic to the character and enhancement of the existing building.

The first floor living room was extended to include a balcony, which affords superb views over open countryside.

The first floor extension has two further bedrooms with an adjacent bathroom.

The work involved significant steelwork design/alterations. The building works were exceptionally well managed with excellent quality control regarding construction and Health and Safety procedures.

The excellent standards of design, workmanship, including finishes, make this a quality family home.

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**Penylan House, Aberthin**Applicant: **Mr. R. Wood**Agent: **Mr. Gwyn Davies**Contractor: **Mr. Ron Stockwell**

This project involved the construction of a single storey rear elevation extension to an existing dwelling, providing a large kitchen/dining area with a balcony roof.

As the extension was built into a steep bank, large quantities of excavated material were removed and this being a confined site, the contractor worked sympathetically with the neighbours, ensuring minimum disruption.

Reinforced concrete foundations and retaining wall construction were provided, including tanking as a barrier against ingress of moisture to the inside of the building.

Land drainage was also provided externally to the perimeter/retaining wall construction, so as to relieve any possible build-up of water pressure.

The construction involved the use of proprietary shuttering and careful fixing and setting up of the steel reinforcement.

The roof of the extension provides a balcony area which has been tastefully paved over and affords splendid views over a mature garden. The extension matches the existing house, enhancing the appearance, coupled with high standards of workmanship.

Due to the limited access to the site, the concrete was pumped from the adjacent access/driveway with minimum disruption to neighbours, by applying Health & Safety site management.

**10 Cornerswell Place, Penarth**Applicant: **Mr. John Page**Contractor: **T. W. Boagey**

The works comprise a single-storey ground floor extension, with part mono pitch and part lean-to roof. In the front section, the extension provides a breakfast room with vaulted ceiling, adjacent to the kitchen. The breakfast room has good daylight provision from a roof light and front glazed screen.

Steel beams, with fire protection, were inserted to structural engineer's design in a new opening between the existing kitchen and the new breakfast room. The rear section of the extension incorporates a very practical hobby room opening out onto the garden.

Submitted as a Building Notice, this project was executed by a very experienced father and son building team. The rainwater was dealt with by the inclusion of a modern 'crate' soakaway system, due to the limited permeability of the ground.

The builder, applicant and Building Control officer worked in close consultation throughout the project, which exemplifies the ethos of working in partnership.

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# The Vale of Glamorgan Council Building Excellence Awards 2010

## Category 1 - Nomination for Extensions & Alterations



### The Cottage, Westgate, Cowbridge

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Applicant/Agent: **Keith J. Evans**

Contractor: **Toutt Builders**

The scheme involved the complete renovation of the property, including the taking down and rebuilding of principle load bearing walls and floors in the existing structure, which were found to be defective during construction.

The completed property, which was designed by the owner/architect, involved the construction of a new two storey extension incorporating an integral garage with bedroom over, and the construction of a new kitchen, utility room and conservatory.

Certain aspects of the work were difficult, due to the defective existing structure. The Building contractor overcame the difficulties and achieved a building which displays high standards of workmanship, complemented by the internal fittings and fixtures.



# The Vale of Glamorgan Council Building Excellence Awards 2010

## Category 2 - Nomination for New Single Dwellings



### Former Vale Garage, St Mary Church

Applicant: **Mr. Len Richards, Vivard Ltd., Llantwit Major**

Contractor: **Steve Lee Builders, Llantwit Major**

The location of the dwelling, is in a rural setting, on the site of former garage premises. The builder therefore had to undertake remedial ground works prior to construction commencing.

The construction incorporates many architectural features and is complemented by a builder who is meticulous with regard to craftsmanship and detail.

The dwelling comprises a ground floor conservatory, four bedrooms, two with ensuite bathrooms and one family bathroom.

All fittings fixtures and decoration are to a high standard and of a tasteful design.

The dwelling also includes a detached double garage.

The dwelling is of a traditional construction embracing high levels of insulation, built to meet today's high thermal insulation standards. The energy assessment and air test confirmed that this house had higher results than any other previously checked.



### 10 Clive Place, Penarth



Applicant/  
Contractor: **Goldsworthy Homes Ltd**

This new dwelling is set at the end of an established terrace of dwellings within the Penarth Conservation Area. As such, its design was given considerable consideration and scrutiny, to ensure it blended in with surrounding buildings.

The three-storey property provides accommodation of five bedrooms, en-suite and family bathrooms, living room and large kitchen/dining room. Its timber framed construction with substantial insulation levels produced an energy efficient building, without resorting to costly energy saving methods, such as solar panels or photo-voltaic cells.

The external finishes of coursed stonework with brickwork banding, natural slate roof, and sliding sash windows have achieved an appearance well suited to its location. The high standard of finish and workmanship was evident throughout the build process.

A good working relationship between builder and the Building Control Section was also maintained during the contract period so that only a few minor issues had to be resolved at the completion stage.



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## The Vale of Glamorgan Council Building Excellence Awards 2010

## Category 3 - Nomination for Multiple Dwellings



## Former Grammar School, Church Street, Cowbridge

Applicant/Developer: **Mr D.M. Mathias, Centre Great Limited**

Agent: **Davies Sutton Architects of Cardiff**

This Grade II\* Listed Building has been elegantly converted into luxurious apartments.

Previously under the governorship of Jesus College, Oxford, the Grammar School was rebuilt between 1847 and 1852 to the design of the architect John Pritchard. The building was designed to harmonise with the church on the one side and the ancient town gateway on the other.

The original features of blue lias stone, Welsh slated roof and gables, and tall ashlar stacks were renovated where necessary and maintained to their original form.

The building had been vacant for a number of years, therefore requiring a vast amount of work to bring it into habitable use.

A high degree of skill was required to replace the Welsh slate roof covering and the detailed leadwork.

Matching stonework was incorporated in areas of the external wall infill areas, together with sandstone features to match the existing building facade. This work was carried out to such a high standard that it is near impossible to know the difference between new and original areas.

With many of the original internal features maintained, each apartment has a unique design. Matching areas of detailing to the architraves and coving was also required. Where they had to be replaced or extended, it was undertaken to a high degree of workmanship.

The bathrooms and kitchens have been fitted to the highest standard. Staircases internally are of oak design.

Taking into consideration the overall condition of the building, prior to the commencement of the project, the developer has achieved a high quality development, as well as preserving another of our important listed buildings.



## Plots 1 &amp; 2, River Court, Treoes

Applicant: **Mr G & Mrs J Hayward**

Contractor: **A.J.F Building Services Ltd**

River Court is a development of modern housing set on the edge of the village of Treoes, occupying land formerly used by Great House Farm.

The nature of the built-up ground required strip foundations of almost 2.0m in depth,



and both the ground and first floors were of precast concrete beam and block floors, together with a precast concrete staircase.

The contemporary designs follow a theme of mono-pitched roofs, to create a similar style of property, yet display subtle individual differences.

Features include specialist cladding of wood/upvc content, under-floor heating to all levels, angled fenestration, vaulted roofs, an integrated home entertainment system throughout the house, and rain-sensor operated roof-windows.

The contractor maintained constant contact with Building Control throughout the project, and has produced two dwellings to be proud of, which display an exemplary standard of detail and finish.



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## Land at 14, Smithies Avenue, Sully

Applicant/Contractor: **Langdale Homes Ltd**

Agent: **Loyn & Co. Architects**

The work comprises two new dwellings, which replace a dilapidated bungalow on a large plot. They have been designed to maximise the stunning views to the south-west from the rear balconies across the



Bristol Channel, to the north Devon coastline.

Each dwelling is a high specification, large, individually designed, 4 bedroom home. The walls are high performance specialist render on cavity blockwork. Under floor heating has been utilised, with beam and block floors. The roofs are flat 'warm roofs', using a high performance single membrane.

As an example of the generous room sizes in the development, the master bedrooms are 40sq.m plus ensuite. Large panoramic windows have been used to the rear, to benefit from the sea view. Due to the large rooms and the use of a flat roof, rooflights have been added to ensure adequate daylighting. The rear of the properties has been protected from excessive solar gain by the use of solar shading to the ground floor.

Submitted as a Full Plans application, this project was executed by a professional building team, who maintained a close liaison with Building Control throughout the project.



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## The Vale of Glamorgan Council Building Excellence Awards 2010

## Category 4 - Nomination for Social Affordable Housing

Vere Street,  
Barry

Applicant: **Pendragon Design & Build Ltd**

Agent: **Willdig Lammie Partnership**

Contractor: **Pendragon Design & Build Ltd**

The work consisted of 7 flats constructed over 3 storeys and a basement area incorporating the services and rear access to the communal area.

The roof design varied - with traditional pitch roof over the 3 storey section, a flat roof with a canopy design and internal rainwater drainage system over the central staircase, and a pitch roof with parapet walls over the two-storey section.

The building was constructed on a confined site, where health and safety issues were a main concern, especially as it is in a built up area. There are residential and commercial properties in close proximity, which meant limited disruption to the area.

The workmanship was carried out to an excellent standard, reflected in the air-pressure test results being very low - proving that good design, along with construction, can achieve the requirements set-out in the Building Regulations.

The building consisted of a timber frame design with traditional brickwork and brick cladding exterior, along with individual heating systems, achieving good SAP results.

The Building Regulations were submitted under a partnership scheme. The working environment involved the builder, architect, partner authority and LABC warranty, which created a good working partnership.



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Bassett Street,  
Barry

Applicant:

**United Welsh Housing Association**

Agent: **Pentan Partnership**

Contractor: **E.T. & S. Construction Ltd**

A block of flats has been constructed on the site of a former ambulance station in Barry. The block provides 5 residential-supported, 1-bedroom apartments, with an additional apartment for a support worker.

The scheme is built over two floors and incorporates a staircase and lift to the first floor.

The building is traditionally built with masonry walls, trussed roof and concrete tiled roof and as well as having to comply to the building regulations had to also comply with Secure by Design Standards.

The standard of construction was high and the contractor built up a good working relationship with the Building Control Department, ensuring that all statutory inspections were undertaken, as well as non-statutory inspections.

As the project was of a domestic nature, compliance with SAP 2005 was required; including the provision for pre-completion air testing and an Energy Performance Certificate.

All the Energy Performance Certificates on each of the individual flats indicated an energy efficiency level B, in both the energy performance and environmental impact of the project.

Overall, the building is of high quality, due to the relationship between the main contractor and Building Control.

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## The Vale of Glamorgan Council Building Excellence Awards 2010

## Category 5 - Nomination for Commercial Property



## New Pavilion, The Vale of Glamorgan Golf &amp; Leisure Club, Hensol

Applicant/Contractor:

**Leekes**

This new training facility is the latest of a number of developments undertaken through a partnership scheme with Building Control and Leekes.

The state of the art training facility has been constructed for the use of Cardiff City Football Club and Cardiff Blues Rugby Club.

The building has been designed to take into consideration the differing requirements of the two sports, and this is evident on all three levels.

It is a three-storey steel-framed structure with an insulated steel cladding external finish. The floors are concrete, to take into consideration its durable use.

Building regulation compliance has been achieved with access for all fire safety and energy regulations. Part of the energy requirement was to undertake an air test of the building to ensure that the air leakage rate was within the requirements of the building regulations. There was also an energy assessment of the building to predict what carbon emissions there would be from the completed building.

The building has a shared basement where the two teams have separate gymnasium facilities.

The ground and first floor are again set out so that both teams have their own

dedicated areas for the theory and nutritional side of their sports.

As Leekes were the owner and contractor for this development, the quality of finish and site control of all aspects of the construction process could be closely monitored. The good working relationship with building control has been in place for a number of years.

Before the project commenced, there were pre-planning design meetings to iron out any potential problems that might arise during the construction stage.

The overall teamwork approach between Building Control and the developer was a major benefit to the success of the scheme.



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## The Vale of Glamorgan Council Building Excellence Awards 2010

## Category 5 - Nomination for Commercial Property



## Llandough Hospital, Penarth

Applicant: **Cardiff & Vale Trusts**

Agent: **Stride Treglown Davies**

Contractor: **Carter Lauren**

The building combines traditional brickwork, which complements the existing Postgraduate building, with modern terracotta blockwork to create a new and fresh façade.

The plan is designed to accommodate the future extension of the library on the ground floor, flexible seminar spaces on the first floor, teaching rooms and associated offices.

Access to the facade and roof is straightforward, in order to provide an envelope that is easy and safe to maintain.

This new unit was constructed within a very confined site near the main entrance of a very busy hospital; which already has major parking and traffic flow issues.

The unit had to be constructed adjacent to an existing working educational unit, which required the contractor to provide temporary evacuation stairs. Major alterations were also ongoing within the ground floor level.

Another site issue for the contractor was a major live main sewer which ran adjacent to the foundations that also had to be partially diverted in order to construct the new unit.

Numerous site meetings were held between the contractors, architects, NHS Trust staff and Building Control to plan and discuss how the project would develop through the construction process. As a consequence of this team-developed approach, the unit was constructed to a high class finish, which has proved once again that teamwork involving all parties can lead to a very good building being constructed, with minimal disruption, within an ongoing working environment.



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Maer Cyngorydd Emlyn Williams, Maer Bro Morgannwg, wrth ei fodd yn ymwneud â seithfed achlysur cyflwyno 'Gwobrau Adeiladu' Grŵp Rheoli Adeiladu'r Cyngor ac yn dymuno pob llwyddiant i'r rhai sydd wedi'u henwebu

## Fig Tree Restaurant, Penarth



Applicant: **Mr. N. Fox & Mr. M. Caplan**

Agent: **Tony King Architects**

Contractor: **Terry Ford, C/o T. A. Lee Construction**

This property, previously used as a multi-function hall and public shelter, had been in disuse for many years prior to its conversion to a modern restaurant.

The main fabric of the building required little work, except for internal plastering and finishes, to provide well equipped facilities capable of accommodating 60 people within the main restaurant, and a covered balcony area providing external seating for another 20 people.

The roof garden also accommodates a significant number of people during summer days, and is served by a service pod with 'dumb waiter' access to the main kitchen preparation area.

Set within the Penarth Conservation Area, particular regard was given to the external treatment of the conversion, together with the colour scheme and signage of the finished project.

The developers maintained close contact with Building Control, to ensure all potential problem areas were resolved without issue, and to produce a scheme worthy of inclusion in our awards.



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Since the introduction of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 which was effective 1st October 2006, the fire service role has changed, which means that it tends not to give advice, as they are now charged to enforce the fire legislation as opposed to the giving of advice. However, advice and assistance can always be sought from Ivorfire Fire Safety Consultancy.

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As the Vale's most widely-read weekly newspaper, we are committed to supporting the community as a whole, and local businesses in particular, especially at such a difficult time economically.

As such it gives us genuine pleasure to publicly acknowledge their aspirations and achievements – and what better way to do this than through these prestigious Vale of Glamorgan Council awards?

The nominees listed in this special supplement had to fight off formidable competition to get this far and they can be justifiably proud of themselves.

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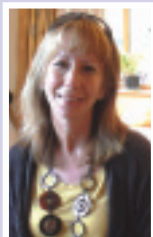
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# The Five Top Tips in Home Extensions

By Fiona Evans



**Manager of A One Construction in Bridgend, Fiona Evans, who has a wealth of experience advising clients on the best alterations to their homes, has provided this list of the 5 best options for improving your home:**

"If you're thinking of moving in the short term, improving your kitchen and bathroom is the most important update you can make to your house, because without a doubt they are the main attraction to potential buyers. However many of our current clients are looking to make the most of their existing homes and enjoying what they have got now, plus of course, the right improvements will help sell the house in the future when the market improves.

**KITCHENS:** In my experience, the most popular renovation work to a house is the extension of a kitchen, either by building a single or double storey and making the kitchen larger, or by joining the kitchen and dining room together. The open plan kitchen and diner is very popular at the moment as the kitchen dining area is always a place where friends and family gather and many people feel that a separate dining room is wasted space. It also gives the chef of the house an

opportunity to mingle with guests. I would always recommend buying the best kitchen units you can afford and also the very best worktop as it will last a long time and improve the value of the house should you choose to move.

**A LOFT CONVERSION** is very popular, as there is no groundwork necessary and often it is space going to waste. A carefully constructed loft extension can supply a family with an extra bedroom and bathroom and still give room for storing things in the eaves.

Provided you can accommodate the stairs, a loft extension is an excellent option for a growing family. The position of the additional stairs is important, but with careful planning can provide so much space. As part of a larger conversion, with maybe a two storey extension, this can provide economical additional room.

**BEDROOMS, ENSUITE AND BATHROOMS:** If you extend the house on the ground floor it makes sense to seriously consider a double storey extension, as the cost of the work is in the foundations and is not twice the price of a single storey addition. I would not recommend extending the house beyond 4 or 5 bedrooms unless you have a

very large family and need the space, but extend the master bedroom and provide a full ensuite. Providing an extra separate bathroom will add more value to the house.

As mentioned before, if you're considering moving in the short term, do spend time and money on updating your bathroom. If the sanitary ware is good, then spend money on new taps for the shower and basins and ensuring

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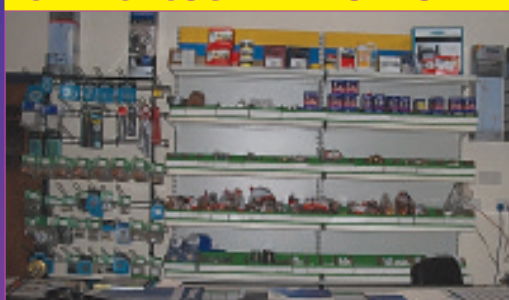
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**GEM**





# Superb cast can't save Brothers from being an uneven piece of work...

**A**FTER his break-through turn in *Donnie Darko*, Jake Gyllenhall has slowly been building a solid body of work, mixing big budget fare with less mainstream work.

Before he truly goes supernova with the release of *Prince of Persia* later this year, audiences can see him in Irish director Jim Sheridan's latest film, *Brothers*.

Gyllenhall plays Tommy, who is recently released from prison and reconnects with his family, particularly older brother Sam (Tobey Maguire), a marine.

When Sam is posted to Afghanistan and goes missing, presumed dead, Tommy begins to develop a relationship with Sam's wife Grace (Natalie Portman) and his two nieces, as they learn to live their lives without Sam; but when Sam is found and returns home, the lives of all three of them begin to change dramatically...

Having all achieved a degree of fame and renown in a similar time period, *Brothers* offers the opportunity for Tobey Maguire, Jake Gyllenhall and Natalie Portman to prove they have the necessary nous to deliver in more dramatic fare.

While they definitely deliver here, it is a shame that the material that supports them is so flimsy and workmanlike that it renders their turns a touch worthless in the overall scheme of things.

Certainly, the main three performances make the film better than the material would allow, with all three of the performers delivering strong turns that offer up a little more substance than we've seen from them in a while.

The real revelation is Tobey Maguire, who casts off the *Spiderman* outfit and proves that, before he was a superhero, he was also a pretty good actor. His performance as a family man whose love for his wife and children sits alongside his devotion to serve his country is the best on show, the nobility and commitment to the cause giving way to slow breakdown as the effects of his return affect both him and those close to him.

Maguire shows a deft ability here, letting the horrors he suffers boil slowly to the surface, with the smallest of actions (popping his daughter's balloon,

reacting to noises in the night by waving a gun around) hinting at even more trouble below the surface.

As the wife whose love for her husband is tested by the events that take place in Afghanistan, Natalie Portman delivers another mature performance that feels credible and affecting.

Much like Maguire, hers is a performance that slowly unravels as her character gets put through the ringer and the actress is more than up to the task, captivating the screen and never failing to elicit an emotional response, wonderfully conveying the situation she finds herself in.

As the black sheep of the family, Jake Gyllenhall offers another robust turn, getting to grips with the process of developing the character as events force him to take a look at his life, and if he suffers from the failure of the script to really get under the skin of his character, his performance certainly manages to paper over the cracks.

David Benioff's screenplay, adapted from the Danish film of the same name, is the one element that fails to hold up its end of the bargain, feeling muddled, lacking notable depth despite its heavy subject matter and feeling very much undercooked.

Given the drama that unfolds throughout the course of the film, you would imagine the story would severely tug at the heartstrings, yet Benioff struggles to really convince.

He fails to give meat to the narrative and reduces sub-plots that could have given the story depth (Tommy's crime, the relationship the two brothers have with their father, the relationship between Grace and Tommy) to barely anything.

It is frustrating, particularly as Irish director

## SCREEN TALK



by GARETH JAMIESON

Jim Sheridan attempts to give the film a degree of punch and emotion.

His skill as a director certainly helps bring out the solid performances from his cast, as there are also strong offerings from Sam Shepard as the brothers' father, Bailee Madison and Taylor Geare as Sam and Grace's two daughters, and a small cameo from up and coming British actress Carey Mulligan; however, saddled with Benioff's weak and well worn screenplay, the director isn't able to transform the material given to him into gold.

It's a shame that such strong performances can't quite bring the rest of the film up to speed, but unfortunately Benioff's script is the main weight that brings down *Brothers* – and makes such superb turns from the cast feel a touch spoiled.

**VERDICT** – Somewhat of an underwhelming misfire, *Brothers* sees the performances of Tobey Maguire, Jake Gyllenhall and Natalie Portman pack a punch that is undone by David Benioff's lacklustre script.

If only this had been improved upon, then *Brothers* would be a powerful look at the effect of loss on a family; instead it is an uneven piece of work held together by a superb cast. *Average*.

## NEWS FROM POSITIVE IMAGE PHOTOGRAPHIC SOCIETY

### A new venture for PIPS group



A member's image called 'Canada'.

**FOLLOWING** an enforced winter break due to the recent bad weather, Positive Image Photographic Society members got together for their 'Late, Late Christmas Dinner', at the Mount Sorrel Hotel.

The New Year not only promises an exciting mix of guest speakers, but also a new venture when members will be exhibiting images publicly for the first time.

This has not been practicable before because the home base, St Baruc's Church, Barry Island, is, of course, in constant use and a suitable, alternative venue, has not been available.

'Just Pictures', an exhibition of members' work will open to the public at the Park

Gallery, Victoria Park, Cadroxton on February 6 and will continue until February 28. (More details are available from John Greatrex on 07809 551465).

The next meeting, on February 4, will feature Gareth Martin 'CPAGB' who will be making his first visit to PIPS.

Gareth's presentation of images of the Highlands of Scotland promises to be a feast of brilliant landscapes.

**Positive image** Photographic Society meets at 7.30pm on alternate Thursdays at St Baruc's Church, Phyllis Street, Barry Island. New members will be made very welcome.

Further details of the club and forthcoming events including forthcoming competition details are on the societies website at [www.positiveimagebarry.org.uk](http://www.positiveimagebarry.org.uk).

# Local man leads the battle to save butterfly from a killer parasite

**O X F O R D** University research ecologist Owen Lewis, formerly of Bridgend, is leading a countryside study into the sudden decline of one of Britain's most colourful garden butterflies.

Talking to members of the Bridgend Wildlife Group, Dr Lewis explained that the Small Tortoiseshell (Aglais urticae) is under threat from an alien species of a parasitoid fly (Sturmia Bella) which is believed to be partly responsible for a sudden crash in the butterflies' UK population.

The fly crossed the English Channel in 1968, arriving in Hampshire before moving slowly north.

The rapid decline started in 2008. The insect – the size of a house fly – appears to single out the Tortoiseshell by laying eggs on the underside of nettles next to the butterflies' caterpillars, said Dr Lewis.

The eggs hatch and develop within the caterpillars as they grow, ultimately killing their hosts and wiping out an entire summer brood.

A research team made

up of Oxford scientists and experts from other wildlife groups, including Butterfly Conservation, rely on 200 volunteers across the UK to collect the butterflies' caterpillars and breed them in captivity, before sending the results to the team for laboratory analysis.

Dr Lewis, a fellow of Brasenose College, Oxford, and working in the Zoology department, said that the results of the survey over two years – involving 150 batches of eggs – showed that two thirds were attacked by *Sturmia Bella*.

However, more research was needed to prove that the fly (among other natural predators and parasites) was largely responsible for the butterflies' death.

The Small Tortoiseshell made a welcome recovery in September 2008 by a continental influx of the species across southern Britain from the east coast, but UK numbers are still declining.

Dr Lewis revealed for the first time that *Sturmia Bella* had moved to the north of England where results of predation were being monitored. The fly has also arrived in south Wales – with evidence from Cowbridge and Pontypool.

"What we are still trying to work out is whether *Sturmia Bella* is responsible for the decline of the Small Tortoiseshell – so we need to know more about the biology of the fly. The question is: does *Sturmia Bella* compete with other native parasitoids?" said Dr Lewis.

Richard Smith of Butterfly Conservation South Wales, said: "This



Owen Lewis.

year, amateur butterfly enthusiasts will be taking part in the survey – collecting larvae from a number of habitats in Wales. This is important work to help identify all the contributory causes for the butterflies' decline.

"From our own records of a survey in one area of the Vale of Glamorgan, we can confirm that sightings of the Small Tortoiseshell were down to three for the entire year of 2008."

The Small Tortoiseshell was a rarity in South Wales through the summer of 2008 – but the butterfly began appearing on nectar-rich garden Buddleia in the autumn, thanks to a late migration from the continent.

Undoubtedly, it is one of our loveliest butterflies and was commonly seen in past years, feeding on garden flowers, alongside Red Admirals and Peacocks, throughout the summer.

It hibernates during the winter – hiding in garden sheds, on ivy-clad walls and trees – and even indoors behind curtains and blinds.

The current research programme is vital for the butterfly's survival.

## Two wins out of three for Llantwit boxers

**CELTIC Club, Maesteg was the latest venue for three Llantwit Major boxers.**

Lee Dixon from Rhosau boxed N Sheeran, Caerai Dragons ABC, in a three two-minute rounds contest. Lee boxed well behind a good straight left hand, winning the first two rounds.

Sheeran changed his tactics in the last round, trying to stay close to Lee. The Llantwit boxer was guilty of holding, and the referee gave him

**RIGHT: Lee Dixon.**



about, he moved well around the ring, and he won the contest on a unanimous decision from the three judges.

Dale Phillips boxed the host club boxer T Penny in the last bout of the night. Dale had lost weight for this contest and fought well for the two rounds. The last round saw the boxer from the strong Maesteg club coming forward throughout the final round. Dale was under pressure but taking most of the blows on his arms. The referee gave Dale Phillips a standing count of eight, and Penny got the close decision.

Email your news and views to: [ggem@internet-today.co.uk](mailto:ggem@internet-today.co.uk)

## Barry Lions' concert for Haiti

**BARRY Lions Club have rushed to the aid of the people of Haiti – and members are feeling a sense of personal loss.**

A club spokesman said: "The Haiti earthquake has affected Lions Clubs directly, as two members of Haiti Lions were killed in the disaster, as were some relatives of other members of the club.

"Despite their personal tragedies, the members, together with a visiting Lions Club from Canada, helped in the rescue activities. Lions Clubs International has already responded with an immediate donation of \$350,000 and funds are pouring in from other clubs throughout the world.

"Barry Lions Club had already arranged a charity ABBA tribute night for January 30 at the Old School, Sully, and it has now been agreed that all the proceeds will be sent to add to the reconstruction funds for the Haitians."

Barry Lions Club's 'ABBA' Extravaganza features local singing star Maria Lyn.

It takes place on Saturday, January 30 at 7.30pm for an 8pm start at The Old School, South Road, Sully.

There will be a licensed bar and buffet and tickets are £15 each – contact the following for details: John Arbourne – 029 2053 0114; Ian Mathias – 029 2053 0441; Julian Meredith – 029 2053 0004.

## Vale Council offers charities recycling deal to boost funds

**CHARITIES are being offered the opportunity to boost their funds and help the environment by forging recycling partnerships with the Vale Council.**

Under a new scheme agreed by the council cabinet, charities contributing recyclable waste being removed from the domestic waste stream, will be paid £10 per tonne for their material.

A number of controls will ensure against error and fraud, and these will include providing proof that the material is from the household waste stream within the Vale boundaries. The projected pay-

ment will reflect the value of the material in recycling markets, and the savings which will be made by the council in not having to collect and dispose of the material.

Two charities, Scope, the organisation supporting those with disabilities whose focus is people with cerebral palsy, and Clothes Aid, will be the first recipients in the Vale. Their materials include paper, glass, cans and textiles.

Schools, colleges, or third party commercial recycling organisations from whom waste is currently collected by the council, would not be eligible.

The cabinet member for visible and building services, Coun Geoff

Cox said: "It is important that the council continues to encourage recycling across the community and that the council benefits from the additional tonnages to assist with meeting Welsh Assembly Government recycling targets."

The Vale Council's current recycling and composting rate is just over 41 per cent, and Assembly targets are 40 per cent (by 2010), 52 per cent (2012-13) and 70 per cent (2024-25). Every 100 tonnes of recycling collected at a cost of £1,000 represents a 0.43 per cent contribution towards the targets.



# Police take the points against Cefn Cribwr

THE Police kicked off and were soon on the attack, and when Cefn were caught off-side at a ruck outside-half Ryan Miles kicked a 30-yard penalty to take the lead.

However, the Police then started to make things difficult for themselves by trying to play from deep inside their own 22, and on one such occasion outside-half Miles was caught in possession and gave away a penalty for failing to release the ball after the tackle. The Cefn full-back kicked a wide-angled penalty goal.

The Police forwards were starting to take control, with Cefn having to play off the back foot and when one of the Cefn backs was

**SOUTH WALES POLICE 21  
CEFN CRIBWR 3**

penalised for not releasing, outside-half Ryan Miles kicked his second penalty.

It was the Police who continued to dominate, with forwards Karl Davies and Jason Davies to the fore. A loose kick out by the Cefn outside-half allowed the Police full-back Adam Hale to gather and drop a smart goal from nearly 40 yards. Half-time score: SWP 9, Cefn Cribwr 3.

The second half was much the same as the first, with the Police forwards on top, but on one of the few occasions when Cefn did threaten, a dropped pass proved costly, allowing Police second row forward

Mark Rees to gather and gallop away from his own 22, before being dragged down in the opposing 22.

The Police soon extended their lead when some fine inter-passing between backs and forwards saw outstanding flanker Jason Davies crash over, Miles just hitting the post with the conversion.

From the restart, the Police were soon back on the attack and a neat chip ahead from scrum-half Nathan Williams allowed wing Mark Down to score wide out, with Miles converting with a fine touch line conversion.

BS

## Youth team earn good away win



Full-back Craig Davies goes on another strong run towards the Penarth line.

SOUTH Wales Police Youth visited Penarth, who had only lost once so far this season (against Rhymney in the cup) and knew this would be a stern test

The home side threw everything against the Police, but the defence held solid with some brilliant work from Will Thomas, Mathew Jones and Ashley Berrows.

The Police looked dangerous with ball in hand and broke the deadlock when influential full-back Craig Davies put in a well-timed kick for wing Dan James to hack on and dive over for the first try.

The Police extended their lead with a well-taken penalty from Craig Davies, and applied further pressure but the home side defence stood

**PENARTH RFC YOUTH 5  
SOUTH WALES POLICE 15**

solid. The half-backs Callum Williamson and Howell Roberts supplied the centre partnership of Lee Roderick and Dan Nicholas with quick ball, and they both looked dangerous in attack and with ball in hand.

The home side pulled a try back with a quick tap penalty when a lapse of concentration in the Police defence caught them sleeping.

The Police started the second half the stronger team and attacked the Penarth try line at every opportunity. Penarth came back at them, however, fantastic tackling from Vernon Deladla and Jack Evans kept them at bay.

The Police continued to force their way towards the Penarth line and a loose ball was collected by wing Jack Evans to go on a great solo run to get the second try. Davies added the additional two points.

Penarth piled on the pressure and looked to have closed the gap when a missed pass was picked up and the wing made his way to the try line. However, Police captain Lee Roderick covered across field to put in a try-saving tackle.

The Police defended well for the last few minutes to come away with a very good win

BS



Captain Lee Roderick (13) off-loads to second row Ashley Berrows in support.

Photographs by GARETH DAVIES

# Bryncethin mini and junior rugby round-up Under-8s score some wonderful tries...

**BRYNCETHIN under-8s travelled to Aberavon Green Stars with their entire playing squad available.**

With dry weather, beautiful sunshine and a pitch in perfect condition, both sides played excellent open rugby and scored several quality tries in this exciting and entertaining display.

The game started at lightning speed, with Aberavon scoring a succession of quick tries. Bryncethin began to get back into the game and secured possession after Billy Sinclair and Shea Francis claimed excellent tags.

Ian Hunnam and Jake Whitefield both went close to scoring with scintillating attacking runs, but the home defence held firm on each occasion, ensuring that they held onto their 3-0 lead at the first interval.

The second period started with Bryncethin gaining confidence and determined to reduce the deficit.

Direct running and close support play, involving Ben Lewis and Rhys Williams, led to the first Bryncethin try. Rhys Cawley gathered the pass and weaved his way skilfully through the onrushing defensive line.

From the next play, Morgan Hughes managed to intercept the ball and offload to Mike Gillette, who sprinted clear down the touchline to cross unopposed.

Aberavon came back strongly after conceding these two tries and scored another well-worked try, despite the efforts of Kane Walters in defence.

However, Bryncethin replied immediately, as Miles Blakeman received the ball on halfway, ran across the pitch to exploit the space out wide, before turning swiftly inside to dash clean through and complete a superb solo try to make the score 4-3 to Aberavon.

With the result in the balance and everything to play for, both teams went all-out for the win. Aberavon scored first to stretch their lead, but Shaun Batchelor struck back straightaway, as he jinked swiftly around the advancing defenders to finish off a fantastic try in the corner and give Bryncethin hope of completing the fight back.

However, superb running and support play by the home team resulted in a well-worked score to restore the two-try lead as the game neared full-time.

This was not the final incident of the game, as the Bryncethin youngsters showed tremendous spirit and heart to claim an excellent try with the final move of the game.

Will Laverick was tagged just short of the

line but passed inside to Mike Gillette, who ran over the try line to complete the scoring.

Final score: Aberavon Green Stars 6, Bryncethin 5.

This week's stand-out performance awards went to Miles Blakeman for his excellent tag count and superb try, and Mike Gillette for his fantastic support running and two tries, congratulations!

Match day squad: Kane Walters (captain), Thomas Bassett, Shaun Batchelor, Miles Blakeman, Rhys Cawley, Shea Francis, Mike Gillette, Morgan Hughes, Ian Hunnam, Will Laverick, Ben Lewis, Holly Morgan, Josh Nuth, Billy Sinclair, Jake Whitefield, Rhys Williams.

**Under-11s BRYNCETHIN youngsters showed excellent attitude throughout the match in what turned out to be a comprehensive victory.**

Henry Clark opened the scoring after a couple of minutes and was quickly followed by Nicholas Morgan. The Aberavon youngsters were full of determination and responded shortly after to narrow the score to 10-5.

At this point, Bryncethin stepped up the pace of the game and were richly rewarded for their pressure.

After forcing the Green Stars to touch down behind their own line, the resulting scrum resulted in Nicholas Morgan going over for his second try.

A third score from Nicholas Morgan, one for Connor Ford and three from Scott Winter gave Bryncethin a commanding half-time lead of 40-5.

The Aberavon youngsters showed excellent spirit and determination as they set out to give a better account of themselves during the second half.

Two scores from Bryncethin through Callum Lethardy and Scott Winter stretched the lead. Aberavon never gave up and at long last they were able to apply concerted pressure to Bryncethin. They were rewarded with two tries to add to their earlier efforts.

To finish the scoring, Callum Lethardy and Scott Morgan crossed again to give the second half a much closer 20-10 score.

Overall, Bryncethin played a great game, proud of our players and how often do you hear that about a group of 15-year-old lads?

The Bryncethin boys were undoubtedly underdogs today, but gave a stirring display.

Callum Lethardy, Connor Ford, Henry Clark, Ieuan Davies, Jacob Walters, Nicholas Morgan, Scott Winter, Sam Harding and William Blake.

**Under-15s A MATCH of two halves saw a very good and well-organised large Cowbridge squad cut Bryncethin under-15s every time they secured the ball, with direct running and a well-drilled pack winning the breakdown and taking a number of set pieces.**

Bryncethin had only a glimpse of what could be possible with only one line break, the half-time score 0-37 to Cowbridge.

The second half was an all too different game, with Bryncethin setting their defensive line from the kick-off, putting body and soul on line with great all round team effort.

Cowbridge scored an unconverted try mid-way through the half, but instead of Bryncethin heads dropping, they only raised their game and defence even higher, and were rewarded with a well-deserved try by the right wing after the ball was worked through the forwards and backs.

A nasty injury to the stand-in second row for Bryncethin, who was taken off with a broken leg, could have shook the Bryncethin boys but the intensity and effort did not falter. A last-minute unconverted try by Cowbridge finished the game.

No one player was named man-of-the-match as ALL the young men on the field deserve respect and a huge pat on the back for never giving up on each other.

This is what Welsh rugby is all about, a small village side playing a much more advanced side full of district and Blues academy players, with little or no hope of winning.

The boys turn up every Wednesday for training and every Sunday to play and they play any team in the pool.

More help for these teams is what is required, not just the big/district teams who have a waiting list of players, but the real grass root players with big hearts who deserve to play and deserve our respect.

All at Bryncethin are proud of our players and how often do you hear that about a group of 15-year-old lads?

The Bryncethin boys were undoubtedly underdogs today, but gave a stirring display.

RH

# Bridgend boxer wins his Maesteg bout



Left: Richie Canning, right: Levi Jenkins.

**BRIDGEND ABC boxer Richie Canning boxed to a plan at the Celtic Club, Maesteg on Friday, January 22.**

Acer Price from Stables ABC Cardiff started at a good pace with some heavy shots to the body and head, pushing Canning on the back foot.

Round two saw Canning boxing to orders with some fast combinations. Staying up on his toes, Canning used his skill to keep his opponent at a distance.

Round three and four showed Canning taking total control of the fight with some sharp combinations.

nation punches causing Price to take a standing eight count. Price was still trying at the last bell, but Canning was the winner by unanimous decision.

Richie boxes next on February 12 with team mate Levi Jenkins on Bridgend ABC's first show at the OCLP Social Club, Bryntrinion, Bridgend. This venue will also hold the Commonwealth Federation box offs.

Bridgend ABC has already more than 80 members, and if anyone is interested, contact Mark Canning on 01656890144 or Dave Francis on 01446 790099.

## Children learn about emergency services' work

**PUPILS in St Clare's nursery in Porthcawl received a visit from community policeman PC Steve Carpenter recently to talk about 'people who help us'.**

The children were fascinated and responded well to his questions – some of them were even able to try on some of his uniform!

PC Carpenter also brought along his puppet, Tarian the Dragon, who delighted the children with his naughty tricks.

The children learnt about the police, fire service, ambulances, coastguards and mountain rescue. PC Steve explained to the children their different roles, the uniforms they wear, and the different kinds of transport they all use.

## Pendre by-election candidates

**NOMINATIONS have closed in the Pendre by-election; there will be a five-way fight for the vacant seat on Bridgend County Borough Council which was held by the Liberal Democrats.**

Coun Mike Simmonds resigned on health grounds. All four main political candidates are fielding candidates and

they are joined by an independent.

Polling is on February 18. Those standing are: Diane Armstrong of Laleston, Independent; Anita Davies of Litchard, Liberal Democrat; Timothy Thomas of Brackla, Plaid Cymru; Alan Wathan of Litchard, Conservative; Richard Young of Bridgend, Labour.

## Book fair deadline

**BECAUSE of the recent adverse weather, Bridgend Lions have decided to extend the home collection of donated books until the end of February for the Charity Book Fair on March 5-7.**

Books on any subject can be handed in at Bridgend YMCA (9am-5pm any weekday) and arrangements can be made for larger donations to be collected by telephoning 01656 652244 or 0845 833 9582, or e-mailing bookfair@bridgendlions.org.uk.

Read your GEM online: [bridgend-today.co.uk](http://bridgend-today.co.uk) or [porthcawl-today.co.uk](http://porthcawl-today.co.uk)



## TONDU JUNIOR AND MINI RUGBY ROUND UP

# Osian stars for Tondy under-13s

TONDU won the majority of possession and territory during this match and scored the first try through Matthew Coward, who crashed over from five metres.

Tondy's second try was scored by Osian Flaherty who received a pass from Sam Jarvis to power his way over.

Following another period of pressure, Scott Matthews ran in from 10 metres to touchdown near the posts (converted by Osian Flaherty).

Scott Matthews also

<b>MAESTEG under-13s</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>TONDU</b>	<b>50</b>

got the next try when he received a pass from Rowan Davies to touchdown near the posts (converted by Joseph Jones).

Rowan Davies was next to score, receiving a pass from Osian Flaherty to touch down at the corner.

Next to score was Marc Ellis who picked up from a ruck five metres out to drive his way over for the touch down at the corner.

Joseph Jones converted

the try.

The next try was a solo effort by scrum-half Osian Flaherty who received a pass near his own 22-metre to run impressively from 60 metres to touch down.

The final try was scored by Sam Jarvis who was on hand to pounce on the unattended ball following a run from Osian Flaherty to score.

EJ

## Sports are too much for rusty Tondy under-10s

AFTER a month of not playing, Tondy under-10s welcomed Bridgend Sports to Pandy Park on a crisp Sunday morning.

Bridgend Sports won the toss, decided to receive the kick and the opening encounters were hotly contested, but both teams showed their rustiness from the weather-induced layoff.

Bridgend Sports way opened the scoring with a converted try while the Tondy youngsters battled hard and fair, with some dogged defence by all players, unfortunately they spent large parts of the first period without the ball.

Bridgend Sports were able to score three more tries, two converted before the end of the first period for a half-time score of Tondy 0, Bridgend Sports 26.

The second half saw three changes for Tondy, and again the opening encounters were quite close, even if Tondy did spend some time in defence.

However, the backs looked dangerous when they did get the ball, with several breaks from Josh Evans through mid-field.

Unfortunately these attacks did not provide any points, and it was left to Bridgend Sports to open the second half score.

Despite chasing the game, Tondy continued to tackle and compete and deserved at least one score for their efforts, but Bridgend Sports closed out the game with their second converted try of the half.

**Full time: Tondy 0 Bridgend Sports 40**

The final score line didn't really do justice to

the hard work that all the Tondy youngsters have put in over the last few months.

To the players, keep up the good work, and to the parents it was a little quiet today, let the players know you are there!

Tondy squad: Ben

## Honours even in under-9 match-up

IT was a long time coming, but Tondy under-9s' first games of the new year duly arrived in the shape of a local derby with Bridgend Sports.

It was agreed that three periods should be played to give both squads a good run out.

Tondy kicked off and were immediately under the cosh from a committed and well-drilled Sports side.

Tondy hadn't played for five weeks prior to this fixture and it showed. They were second best in every department and Sports took advantage by scoring two well-taken tries.

It was beginning to look a bit grim for the Tondy youngsters, but as the game wore on they started to string some play together, allowing Morgan Strong to bustle through for a well-taken score.

Sports responded soon after with one of their own and the period finished 3-1 to Sports.

The next period started in a similar fashion to the first, but this time Tondy were able to offer better resistance in the forwards department - competing well and driving Sports back.

Morgan Strong was again showing fine form

Merchant, Eleri Knight, Jack Llewellyn, Callum Borton, Josh Davies, Garrin Thomas, Ryan Kershaw, Shannon Price, Jordan Morgan, Josh Evans, Iwan Knight, Ioan Thomas, Morgan David.

JK

and was able to snatch two well-taken tries, securing his hat-trick.

Although Sports were suffering a little from the Tondy onslaught they were not out of it, nicking a fourth try to make in 4-3 in their favour.

Indeed, Sports looked the most likely to win at this point, but Tondy stuck to the task, securing ball near their own line and releasing Callum Vause for a length-of-the-field try to level the scores.

The third period was very entertaining and the game ebbed and flowed with neither side really making a decisive breakthrough.

Tondy did come close at the death, but a try-saving tackle from Sports saved the day.

Congratulations to both sets of players in what was an enthralling and competitive game, with both teams a credit to the borough.

**Final score 4-4.**

**Match squad:** Lewis Oates, Ciaran Edwards, Callum Vause, Luke Brett, Daniel Mayne, James Murray, Patrick Riley, Jacob Thomas, Lewis Dyke, Luke Dingle, Ellis Mathews, Nathan Harris, Cameron Keegans, Morgan Strong, Rhys Wagstaff.

**DAVID MAYNE**

## Pencoed are sunk by second half Aber blitz

<b>PENCOED</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>ABERYSTWYTH</b>	<b>45</b>

MID-TABLE visitors Aberystwyth ran out comfortable winners at Pencoed, scoring 30 second half points!

Things looked promising for the home side, when after 10 minutes they moved the ball, and with prop forward Andrew Shillam, showing good hands in midfield, centre Lloyd Ryland cut through, and put supporting full-back Tom Cross over wide out.

Aberystwyth responded immediately and added two quick tries and a penalty goal to lead 15-5.

Approaching half-time, Pencoed centre Geoff Hobbs then got a try at the posts, Marc Davies converted. Davies then added a further penalty goal, and the teams were level at the interval 15-15.

Unfortunately for Pencoed, the second half belonged entirely to the visitors, who with the lion's share of possession, scored three tries to secure a valuable away try bonus point.

A late intercept try from Cross brought some respectability to the scoreline.

On Saturday, Pencoed will travel to Mumbles and will know they have to improve significantly to stave off impending relegation.

TR

## The Seaweeds rue letting their 10-point lead slip

A LAST-MINUTE penalty kick from Maesteg Celtic saw the Lynfi valley side square the match and give them a well-deserved and welcome two league points.

Porthcawl, however, would be disappointed after building up a 13-3 lead and then seeing the scores levelled after some undisciplined play from the hosts.

It all started well for the Seaweeds, reaching an early six-point lead through two penalties from Will Gallifant.

Maesteg soon reduced the deficit with a penalty kick of their own and were unlucky not to

<b>PORTHCAWL RFC</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>MAESTEG CELTIC</b>	<b>13</b>

reach half-time in the lead after several missed efforts.

However, it was Porthcawl who restarted with a three-point lead and were unlucky not to score early on after some good work from backs and forwards combined.

Porthcawl maintained this pressure and were rewarded when veteran prop Richards crashed over from a full two metres, converted by Gallifant to give them a 10-point lead.

Maesteg responded well and despite being reduced to 14 men after a sending off, came more and more into the game.

Porthcawl didn't help themselves much by giving away senseless penalties, enabling the away team to gain ground and put pressure on the home defence.

It was from one such penalty that, after a quickly-taken tap, Celtic breached the defensive line to score a converted try between the posts.

At this stage, Porthcawl should have closed the game down with only minutes to go but another penalty saw the points shared - much to the chagrin of the home supporters.

CHRIS WINTLE

## Pencoed serve up five-star show

PENCOED under-12s started off the game well considering this was their first game in five weeks.

Aberkenfig defended really well in the first 10 minutes, keeping Pencoed out but after 15 minutes, Ben Gweither struck a lovely ball which rebounded off the 'keeper into the path of Jordan Burrows, who tapped the ball into the back of the net making it 1-0 to Pencoed.

Aberkenfig had their chances, but Pencoed defended well to keep them out. Soon after, a ball was threaded through for Jordan Burrows, who kept his head to make it 2-0.

The game was still evenly matched at this point but Pencoed were getting more and more of the possession.

Ben Gweither went down the line with the ball and managed to get in the box but was brought down by the defender. The referee had no choice other than to award a penalty to Pencoed.

Evan Price stepped up to take the penalty and hit the ball straight into the top right hand corner to make it 3-0.

The second half started with a number of changes from Pencoed. Aberkenfig put up a good fight, keeping Pencoed out until Pencoed had a corner which was scrambled away, only to fall to Tom Miller on the edge of the 18-yard box, who struck it straight in the back of the net giving Pencoed a 4-0 lead.

Lewis Butler scored a lovely goal, ending the game 5-0 to Pencoed.

CHARMAIN GOLDSWORTHY

## Under-12s' magnificent seven

THIS game started with Pey-y-fai on the attack and that's the way it went for the whole game against Bridgend Town, as they won 7-0.

The first goal came from a cross from Jac Lewis, which left-back Ben Symmonds put away with a sweet header.

Zac Edwards soon had his first goal after a well-timed pass from Daniel Miles.

The third goal was a good move

with Cameron Thomas and Huw Williams combining to put Edwards in for his second.

Ellis Rosser slipped a great through ball to Rob Symmonds, who laid it off to his brother Mathew, who finished well.

The fifth soon came with both subs Callum Jones and Greg Smeaton combining well for Greg to smash the ball past the keeper.

Goal number six came when big centre-half Thomas James went up for a corner and Alex Howland put a pinpoint cross in

for Thomas to finish.

Smeaton then scored his sixth goal of the season when he ghosted past three defenders to put the ball in the corner to finish the scoring for the day.

At the end of the game under-12s coach Peter Jones came down to see the lads, having just overcome a heart attack the previous weekend.

He would like to thank everybody from inside and outside the club for their good wishes and support.

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### CALLING ALL CLUB OFFICIALS!

The GEM welcomes your match reports, and other club items of interest. Email them to: [ggem@internet-today.co.uk](mailto:ggem@internet-today.co.uk) or post to the Editorial Department, The GEM, Graig House, 53 Eastgate, Cowbridge CF71 7EL



## KENFIG HILL RUGBY ROUND-UP

# First team are just pipped by Skewen

**KENFIG HILL** Firsts played Skewen in a cracking top of the table clash, but Kenfig let themselves down by conceding far too many penalties.

Kenfig made a good start when outside-half Nicky Giles put a kick over. Skewen then had two quick penalty chances, with outside-half Anthony Buselli scoring with one of them.

Skewen were attacking close to the line where the Mules took the ball off them, but the Skewen prop Rhys Jenkins caught the attempted clearance kick and crossed the line.

Kenfig Hill bounced straight back with a well-taken penalty by Giles. A superb tackle by winger Alex Pearce prevented Skewen scoring on the corner after a well-crafted backs move.

Buselli then landed a long range penalty, but Kenfig responded immediately when a Skewen clearance kick was charged down. The ball was kicked ahead and the fleet-footed Giles won the race to touch down. He then converted his own try.

This gave a half time score of: **Kenfig Hill 13 Skewen 11.**

For the first 10 minutes of the second half, Kenfig Hill could not get out of their own half but still managed to increase their lead when Giles put over a penalty from inside his own half.

Giles then followed up with another penalty. However, Kenfig conceded a second try when a Skewen centre broke through some poor tackling to score near the posts, Buselli converting.

Skewen had the lion's share of possession in the last quarter of the game and Buselli added a penalty to give them the lead by one point. Buselli sealed the game with a debatable penalty just before the end.

Final score: **Kenfig Hill 19 Skewen 24.**

Steve Gillard was named as 'G O'Sullivan Hon Sec Kenfig Hill RFC man-of-the-match' with another good performance by Nicky Giles. Centre Nicky Morgan performed at his usual high level. Hooker Lee Williams again gave a commanding performance and back row forward Dai Quinn also played well.

<b>KENFIG HILL Seconds</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>TONDU Seconds</b>	<b>0</b>

**THIS** was another excellent result for the Mules against local rivals Tondur in the sunshine in North Cornelly.

From the outset, the Mules' backline threatened to cut loose, but dogged defence from a hardworking Tondur side limited the Mules to only one first half try, a 50-yard dash from left wing flier Steven Shalders.

In the second half, the Mules scored a further two long-range tries, both scored by young full-back Scott Hancock. The first was made by some destructive running from centre Dai Williams, who timed his scissors pass to Hancock to perfection for a well-worked try under the sticks.

The second try was an individual effort from Hancock, who had an all-round excellent game in both in defence and attack.

The three tries were converted by busy scrum-half Matthew Tossell, who also kicked two first half penalties.

Congratulations to Tondur, who battled throughout the game and showed some excellent support play between backs and forwards, especially in the second half, but it was the Mules who thoroughly deserved the victory with some fine individual displays from Nos 1 to 15.

The supporters man-of-the-match was given to No 8 Dai Dent, closely followed by his fellow back row men Craig Williams and Alun Brace.

<b>KENFIG HILL/ CORNELLY YOUTH DUNVANT</b>	<b>17</b>
	<b>22</b>

**THE Youth went to Dunvant with 15 players and gave a creditable performance to lose narrowly.**

Shaun Burnell scored all the Mules points with two tries, two conversions and a penalty.

Jonathan Steggle and Russ Stanton played really well for the Mules, and Daniel Heatley had an outstanding game in his debut for Kenfig Hill.

<b>KENFIG HILL UNDER-6s v BRIDGEND ATHLETIC</b>
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**THE young Mules played in the frosty sunshine at Cynffig Comprehensive School against excellent opposition from Bridgend Athletic.**

The two clubs shared 36 tries (18 each) in two games of tag rugby for which every player should be immensely proud of their contribution.

**Kenfig Hill under-7s** completed the double over their rivals, running out 12-10 winners in an end-to-end classic. No team asked or conceded any ground and either side could have come away with the win.

Victory eventually came down to the Mules having three players record a hat-trick. George Buckley's attacking display was sensational for his three scores. Captain Jack Davies' pace enabled him to follow up six in the reverse fixture with three more. Alex Underhill's eye for a gap out wide meant he collected three tries for the second game running.

Finishing off the feast of try-scoring for the mini-Mules were deceptively quick Oliver Pinches and Mark Underhill (two), who was unlucky not to also pick up a hat-trick.

It would be wrong to think the try-scorers alone made the victory as the commitment from every player was simply outstanding. Joshua Jones again tagged his heart out, as did Ewan Davis, Conor Jenkins and Ewan Orchard.

Dafydd Jones, in particular, made good ground whenever in possession, and Thomas Llewellyn showed he's increasingly becoming a handful with ball in hand.

## UNDER-8s

**Encouraged by winning three of their last four games, Kenfig Hill under-8s then took to the field and put on another superb performance.**

However, a very good Bridgend Athletic team

proved a little too strong for the Mules, running out 8-6 winners.

Captain Ben Evans crossed the line three times for the Mules, including once after a length-of-the-field move from his team mates that brought rapturous applause from the large crowd.

Harry Cooper's brace of tries took his season's tally to 14, most of which are scored in close encounters when his team most needed a try.

Connor John's performance, including his second try of the season, was far and away his best of the season, being the link man in several attacks.

Bravely playing against boys and girls older than him to even out the numbers, Callum Hill more than held his own with a couple of lovely runs and passes. Equally good ball skills from barn-stormers Rhys Perry and Cameron Trehar pushed the opposition back, allowing Dylan Pearson to drive through a solid away team defence on a few occasions.

Luke Tozer never stopped challenging the attackers, magnificently supported by Tom Watkins throughout the game. Jack Rundle was constantly close to breaking the opposition's defensive line and proved a handful all game.

A thoroughly engaging game was enjoyed by everyone, the passion of both sets of players matched only by that of referee Darren Underhill and Athletic's under-8s coach. Bring on the rest of the season.

<b>KENFIG HILL UNDER-8s v GARW VALLEY</b>
---

**THE Christmas break and big freeze meant the mini-Mules hadn't played for the last four weekends, so there was much excitement at the**

**prospect of a clash with Garw Valley.**

Intended as an away fixture, the venue was changed at the 11th hour to a frosty but playable Cynffig Comprehensive School pitch.

First to taste competition in 2010 were the under-8s, led by club captain and two-try speedster Ben Evans. His brace was matched by the always-impressive Harry Cooper, accompanied by one each from regular scorers Kieran Tantom, Tom Watkins and Jack Rundle.

Shaking off the ring-rustiness with consistently high class midfield play were Dylan Pearson, Rhys Perry and Oliver Roberts. The trio, together with solid defensive performances from Cameron Trehar, Connor Hill and Calvin Gorrington, restricted Garw Valley to three tries.

A 7-3 winning start to the New Year from the under-8s will be a real confidence boost for them, and good things are anticipated for the young Mules over the rest of the season.

An equally competitive game saw Kenfig Hill's under-7s, wonderfully led by captain Ewan Davis, eventually ease away in the second half to an 8-2 win.

Top-taggers Thomas Llewellyn, Ewan Orchard, Dafydd Jones and Mark Underhill prevented Kenfig Hill's line from being crossed in the second half, paving the way to victory.

Joshua Jones played particularly well, having one of his best games in a Mules shirt.

Try-scoring was shared by four of the Mules youngsters, with a pair each for George Buckley and Jack Davies, plus one for Oliver Pinches.

Alex Underhill collected a hat-trick, including one with a change of direction that simply left the opposition flat-footed.

GO'S

PHOTOGRAPH BY  
PETER GILLING



Steve Gillard of Kenfig Hill makes one of his breaks.

## Mules and Athletic in local under-9s derby

**BRIDGEND Athletic under-9s travelled to Kenfig Hill, where the fixture was played in the grounds of Cynffig Comprehensive, due to rugby club grounds being unplayable.**

First up were the Greens against Kenfig's stronger side. Straight

from the start, both sides were pressing hard, with some determined running, so much so Jack Obbard had to leave the field after taking a hefty hit, closely followed by Dafydd Beach.

Both players were replaced by Jade Thomas and Megan Webb, who slotted in comfortably, but this was short-lived, as both injured players recovered and were back in play.

There was some fine tackling from both wingers, Jamie Marshall and Kasari Mehta. Beach was controlling the forwards with confidence, proving to be a worthy scrum-half. Each side was finding it difficult to score and the defensive lines were only breached on one occasion, with Connor Fabian crossing Kenfig Hill's line, after a well-worked Ath move.

In the second half, the

forwards captain Gwilym John, Jack Obbard, Thomas Anthony, Charles Creffield and Teo Filis led by example, driving the Kenfig forwards backwards on a number of occasions.

This half was no different from the first, and the Ath players were growing in stature. Connor Fabian was controlling the backs by trying to put them into space, but the opposition defence held and denied the Ath backs.

However, as in the first half, Kenfig had a lapse and with Daniel O'Sullivan taking the ball on the run, Kenfig had no answer to his strength and speed and he powered his way over.

This was a well-balanced game, with some fine rugby from both sides.

Final score: **Kenfig Hill 0, Bridgend Athletic 2.**

Player of the match went to Daniel O'Sullivan, not just for his try, but because he

tackled well all throughout the match.

**ATH YELLOWS A SHAKY start for the Yellows allowed Kenfig in to score the first try of the game.**

After that, the Yellows stuck in there with some fine tackling from Louis King, Megan Webb, James Hermolle, William Goodall and Morgan Evans.

There was also some good support play from Christopher Hart and Brandyn Fooks. Both sides were playing to an high standard with some powerful driving from the forwards, especially from Jade Thomas and Ffion Revil.

As usual, Josh Tidy was like a little terrier, playing with plenty of aggression and with a strong run towards the Kenfig line, he brought the scores level, to bring a half time score of 1-1.

In the second half, the Ath Yellows really gelled together. The same play-

ers were transformed into a completely different outfit, all playing for each other.

There were runs from Megan Webb, who showed tremendous speed and scored the Ath's next try. Wave after wave the Ath attacked through the forwards, allowing Josh Tidy to score two further tries.

Jade Thomas had to leave the field, and on in her place was Thomas Anthony, who made an immediate impact by scoring the Ath's fifth try.

Once again, Kenfig Hill responded by bringing on the artillery, with some of their speedsters.

This seemed to work as they scored their second try and what was to be the final try of the match.

Final score: **Kenfig Hill 2, Bridgend Athletic 5.**

Player of the match went to Ffion Revil, for an outstanding forward display.

PO

## B Attack open six-point lead

**B ATTACK are looking comfortable at the top of the Bridgend Sunday Six-a-side Leisure Leagues Premier Division, as they piled more misery on struggling Brackla Allstars in a crushing 8-0 victory, thanks to Stuart Jackman.**

Croissants lost ground in the title race as they were held 3-3 in a thriller by Team G, while Nicky Phillips was the star for Racing Inter, as they shared a draw via the same score-

line with Persil Boys FC.

Dunraven are nicely perched in third as Sam Scally led them to a 2-0 win over Hangover Heroes, and AFC Just One More Pie fought out a goalless clash with Day Sleepers.

The newly-formed First Division saw Jamie Baldwin ensure Boca Brackla Juniors eased through 4-0 against Dardel Athletic, and Daniel Pucella claimed the star man gong in Athletic Brackla's 4-1 victory over Young Exiles.

## CALLING ALL CLUB OFFICIALS!

The GEM welcomes your match reports, and other club items of interest. Email them to: [ggem@internet-today.co.uk](mailto:ggem@internet-today.co.uk) or post to the Editorial Department, The GEM, Graig House, 53 Eastgate, Cowbridge CF71 7EL



An Ath player makes a break.





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### Street Based Youth Worker / Young Disabled People \*

Temporarily up to 31st March 2011

Re-advertisement (previous applicants need not re-apply)

JNC Youth and Community Support Workers Range Pt 17  
15 hours per week to include evening and weekend work  
Ref: Y-TR-YS046

### Street Based Youth Worker / Driver \*

Temporarily up to 31st March 2011

Re-advertisement (previous applicants need not re-apply)

JNC Youth and Community Support Workers Range Pt 17  
15 hours per week to include evenings and weekends  
Ref: Y-TR-YS045

For further information and an application form contact the Council by visiting [www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk](http://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk) or telephone contact OneVale on 01446 700111 between 8am-6pm.

Closing date: 11 February 2010.

Subject to # Job Evaluation and \* CRB Disclosure.

[valeofglamorgan.gov.uk](http://valeofglamorgan.gov.uk)

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## BRIDGEND TOWN COUNCIL

### Post of Part-Time Temporary Clerical Assistant

The Town Council seeks applications for the above position which is available from March 1, 2010 for the period of one year to cover maternity leave.

Duties include general secretarial/receptionist/administrative duties, minute taking, dealing with telephone enquiries, and typing all necessary documents.

Good IT skills are essential for this post.

Hours are 9.00am-1.00pm Monday-Friday with 10 extra hours per month to cover occasional evening work.  
Salary £8,000 per annum.

Applications in writing with full CV and references to be submitted by Monday February 8, 2010, to:  
The Town Clerk, Bridgend Town Council, Glangwyr, Bridgend CF31 3PF.

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### require a SUNDAY LUNCH CHEF

To work 9am-5pm to prepare and serve lunch.  
Experience required.

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4 days per week,  
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Need to be flexible, reliable and hard working.  
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## Local Event

### VALENTINES' EVENING

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Llantion Hall, Feb 13 Sat 7.30pm £10.  
Tickets only - call Eileen on 01446 794729  
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Everyone welcome - fun evening. Latest date for bookings Jan 30

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## Weddings

### FORTHCOMING MARRIAGE

on the 6th February at Miskin Manor.



Jamie Thomas, son  
of Tony and Chris  
Thomas to Joanne  
Williams, daughter  
of Dr and Mrs  
Howard Williams of  
St Mellons.

Love to you both  
Dad, Mum,  
Caroline, Harby,  
Anysha, Toby xxx

## Birth Notices

Congratulations  
**Sarah & Luke**  
on the Birth of your Son  
**'Archie' Spencer Merlini**  
(Monday 18th Jan 2010)  
with much love from  
Mamgu xxx

## Family Notices

### LINES

Elizabeth

On January 22, peacefully at Velindre Hospital, Betty of Llantwit Major. Beloved wife of Mervyn, loving mum of Julie, Sarah, Mary-Jane and Michael, dear mother-in-law of Roger, Paul, Martin and Stacey, much loved by all her grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Resting at the Private Funeral Home of W James & Sons, Ffônnon. Funeral Thursday, February 4, service 2pm at St James Church, Wick followed by cremation at Coychurch Crematorium, Bridgend at 3.15pm. No black attire, please. No flowers by request, donations in lieu if desired to Cancer Research Wales, Velindre Hospital, Whitchurch, Cardiff CF14 7JF or Macmillan Nurses, 1st Floor, 1 Oldfield Road, Bocam Park, Pencoed, Bridgend CF35 5LJ.

### JENKINS

Huw Steven 1982 - 2010

In his 28th year and after a short illness at the Princess of Wales Hospital, Bridgend on the 18th January 2010, Huw of Boverton, Llantwit Major, dearly loved son of Sue and Ron, sadly passed away. Resting at the Private Funeral Home of W. James & Sons, Ffônnon. Funeral Monday 1st February, Service at St Illtud's Church Llantwit Major 9.45am, Committal Service at Coychurch Crematorium Bridgend 11.00am. Family flowers only. Donations may be sent to Barnardo's Family Link Scheme, c/o J James, 11 Ffônnon Road, Rhosce, Vale of Glamorgan CF62 3DZ.  
A SHINING LIGHT HAS GONE OUT IN OUR LIVES.

### DAVID

Patricia Dorothy

On Jan 19 at UHW, Cardiff, peacefully after a short illness, Patricia (Pat) of Llantwit Major. Beloved wife of Phillip, loving mother of Emma, much loved daughter of Audrey and the late David James, dear sister of Alun. Resting at the Private Funeral Home of W James & Sons, Ffônnon. Funeral Wed Feb 3, service 12.30pm at St Illtud's Church, Llantwit Major, followed by cremation at Coychurch Crematorium, Bridgend at 1.45pm. Family flowers only may be sent to the Funeral Home, donations in lieu if desired to National Association of Colitis and Crohns Disease (NACC) c/o J James, 11 Ffônnon Road, Rhosce, CF62 3DZ.

### HAMMETT

Annie Muriel

Peacefully on January 17 at UHW, Cardiff, Muriel of St Athan, beloved wife of the late William Evan, dearly loved mother of David and Valerie, mother-in-law of Dave, much loved Nana of Christopher, Gavin and Sarah. Resting at the Private Funeral Home of W James & Sons, Ffônnon. Funeral Monday, February 1, service 1.15pm at The Gathering Place, St Athan followed by cremation at Coychurch Crematorium, Bridgend at 2.45pm. Family flowers only may be sent to the Funeral Home, donations in lieu if desired to National Osteoporosis Society c/o J James, 11 Ffônnon Road, Rhosce, CF62 3DZ.



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\* Price shown is for Sevy 1.2 Style, manufacturer's list price £10,995 excluding metallic paint which is an option at £105. £1,000 deposit available at participating dealers only on Sevy 1.2 Style till 31st April 2010. Offer includes vehicle purchased under the government's car finance incentive scheme. On the road price includes VAT, delivery, number plate, 12 month/10000 mile fund finance and first registration fee, additionally a subject to maintenance in accordance with manufacturer's schedule. Terms and conditions apply.



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09 1.6i 16v VTR 5dr Estate Beige 4,084 miles £9,995  
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08 1.0i Rhythm 3dr Hatch Red 16,501 miles £6,995

### CITROEN C2

58 1.4 HDi VTR 3dr Diesel Hatch Black 9,091 miles £8,495  
07 1.1i Airplay + 3dr Hatch Sp Eds Yellow 12,133 miles £6,495  
08 1.4i VTR 3dr Hatch Silver 15,846 miles £7,495  
06 1.6i 16v VTR 3dr SensoDrive Hatch Blue 14,000 miles £5,995  
06 1.6i 16v VTR 3dr SensoDrive Hatch Red 23,521 miles £5,995

### CITROEN C3

03 1.1 Desire 5dr Hatch Special Edition Black 19,390 miles £4,995  
08 1.4i Cachet 5dr Hatch Special Ed Silver 11,905 miles £7,995  
56 1.4i SX 5dr Hatch Grey 19,342 miles £6,495  
55 1.6i 16v Exclusive 5dr Sensodrive Hatch Blue 24,769 miles £5,995  
59 Pluriel 1.4i Cote d'Azur 2dr SE Black 50 miles £10,995

### CITROEN C4

59 1.6i 16v THO VTS 3dr Coupe Blue 2,967 miles £13,995  
05 1.6 HDi 16v VTR + 5dr Diesel Hatch Grey 61,000 miles £5,995  
56 1.6 HDi 16v SX 5dr Diesel Hatch Silver 19,901 miles £7,995  
56 1.6 16v Cool 3dr Coupe Sp Eds Silver 29,002 miles £6,995  
06 1.6 HDi 16v VTR Plus 3dr Dsl Coupe Silver 10,573 miles £8,495

56 1.6i 16v VTR Plus 3dr Coupe Black 36,847 miles £6,995  
07 1.4i 16v LX 5dr Hatch Blue 18,000 miles £6,495  
07 1.6i 16v SX 5dr Auto Hatch Mauve 11,434 miles £6,495

### CITROEN C4 GRAND PICASSO

58 1.6 HDi 16v VTR+ 5dr D Est Grey 19,441 miles £14,495  
08 1.6 HDi 16v VTR+ 5dr D Est Blue 8,749 miles £14,495  
57 1.6 HDi 16v VTR+ 5dr D Est Mauve 12,659 miles £13,495  
07 2.0 HDi 16v VTR + 5dr EGS D Est Silver 21,659 miles £13,495

### CITROEN C4 PICASSO

57 2.0 16v SX 5dr EGS (5 seat) Estate Silver 7,723 miles £10,995

### CITROEN C5

58 2.0i 16v VTR+ 4dr Saloon Blue 21,324 miles £11,995  
58 2.0 HDi 16v VTR+ 4dr Auto Dsl Sal Red 14,994 miles £13,995  
58 2.0 HDi 16v VTR+ 4dr Dsl Saloon Blue 18,297 miles £12,995  
06 HDi 16v Exclusive 5dr Diesel Hatch Silver 35,000 miles £7,995

### CITROEN RELAY

58 2.2 HDi H1 Van 120ps 33 L1 Diesel White 5,041 miles £12,645

### CITROEN XSARA PICASSO

59 1.6i 16v Desire 5dr Estate ??? 1 mile £10,995  
08 1.6 HDi 92 VTX 5dr Diesel Estate Black 25,676 miles £9,995  
07 1.6i 16v Desire 5dr Estate Silver 44,648 miles £6,995  
06 2.0 16v VTX 5dr Auto Estate Blue 30,215 miles £8,595  
03 2.0 HDi SX 5dr Diesel Estate Blue 51,662 miles £4,995

**58 CITROEN C5 2.0i 16v VTR + 4dr Saloon**  
Blue, 21,324 miles **£11,995**



**03 Xsara Picasso 2.0 HDi SX 5dr Diesel Est**  
Blue, 51,662 miles **£4,995**



**06 CITROEN C2 1.6i 16v VTR SensoDrive**  
3dr Hatch, Red, 23,521 miles **£5,995**



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# WHO WANTS TO BUILD WHAT AND WHERE?

Mr Russell Phillips – Highfield, Claude Road West, Barry – detached double garage with attic store.

Mr Huw Thomas – 6 King Street, Penarth – proposed ground floor extension and loft conversion.

Mr Geoffrey Rose – 32 Heol Y Dryw, Rhosneig – infill of porch canopy covering.

Mr Gareth Cording – The Old Chapel, Ewenny Road, St Brides Major – conversion of use from a disused place of worship to a two-bedroom dwelling.

Mr Mary Odgers – 14 Ruthen Terrace, Barry – proposed single storey rear extension to provide ground floor bedroom and disabled showing and WC facilities.

Mr Gareth Cording – The Old Post Office, St Brides Major – development of three one-bed flats including diversion of part of public footpath.

Mr Martin Chalk – 23 Castle Avenue, Penarth – proposed two storey and single storey extensions to rear of property.

Wig Fach Property Co Ltd – Sion Farm, Hazelwood, Ogmogre By Sea – outline application for provision of Public House together with associated beer garden and car parking.

Mr and Mrs Wilson – 4 Windmill Close, Llantwit Major – construct pitched roof over existing flat roof to former garage. Extension and alteration to outbuilding to provide annex to the main house.

Mr Andrew Lamb – 89 Cardiff Road, Dinas Powys – replacement of existing conservatory with extended ground floor extension and conversion of existing integral garage to study.

Mr Jeffrey Saxton – Llanvithyn Farm, Llanfarcraig – lawful development certificate for residential dwelling not subject to agricultural occupancy condition or occupation of dwelling in breach of condition.

Wig Fach Property Co Ltd – Ogmogre by Sea Caravan Park, Hazelwood, Ogmogre By Sea – outline application for re-development of caravan site for residential development, with associated open space.

Wig Fach Property Co Ltd – Beth Rapha, Ogmogre by Sea Caravan Park, Hazelwood, Ogmogre By Sea – outline application for re-development for two dwellings.

Mr Thomas – 50 Victoria Road, Penarth – conservatory extension to the rear elevation.

Mr Alan Jauncey – 7 Ewenny Road, Wick – increase in height of dwelling, front and rear dormer extensions, single storey rear extension.

Mr Philip Hall – 78 Westbourne Road, Penarth – material

change to existing conservatory, site elevation. Mr Philip Morgan – 9 Picton Court, Llantwit Major – single storey front extension.

Mr Martyn Edwards – Spring Meadows, Llandow, Cowbridge – retention of extension to existing barn.

Mr Anthony Evans – Vicarage Lawns, St Brides Major – conversion of garage to provide accommodation for parents.

Miss Helen Jones – 15 Fairfield Rise, Llantwit Major – two storey extension.

Mr and Mrs Coley – 91 Broadway, Llanblethian, Cowbridge – construct new bedroom projections to front and new garden room extension to rear, new single detached garage and boundary wall and gate to front.

Mr and Mrs NJC Griffith – Ty Newydd, St Brides Super Ely – construction of carport including associated external works.

Mr F Coughlan – 23 The White House, The Knap, Barry – amendment to application 2009/00554/FUL to alter roof from and provide Velux window to study.

Mr Michael Davies – land at rear of Silver Birch, Ynys Dawel and St Tudy, Leckwith Road, Llandough – provision of private sewer works (retrospective).

Mr Keith Walker – 6 Fitzhamon Avenue, Llantwit Major – single storey extension to side of property to provide disabled accommodation.

Mr Lesley J Berger – The Lodge, Highfield Close, Park Road, Barry – two storey extension to dwelling.

Mr Shah Rahman – 57 Winston Road Barry – illuminated perspex box sign.

Openreach – side of Barclays Bank, Bradenham Place, Penarth – installation of new green coloured cabinet.

Mr R and Dr E Care – Church House, Fort Road, Lavernock Point, near Penarth – single storey rear extension.

Mr Kenneth George Broadacres, Cog Road, Sully – erection of two detached dwellings (outline).

Mr D Shale – 104 Westbourne Road, Penarth – replace existing roof rear extension with new, and internal alterations.

Broadlands Property Investments Ltd – Mill Barns, Mill Road, Boverton – conversion of barn to three bedroom dwelling.

Mr and Mrs Williams – Caradoc Cottage, Llanfarcraig – demolition of existing sub-standard cottage and replacement with new dwelling and garage.

Mr and Mrs R Burt – 13 Plassey Square,

Penarth – ground floor extension on rear elevation of existing property. Mr and Mrs O'Hagan – Beech House, St Nicholas – installation of timber conservatory to rear elevation.

Mr T Vaughan – Pant Wilkin Stables, Llanquian Road, Aberthaw – provision of hardstanding parking area for vehicles and access track.

Ms J Burgess and Miss K Kisey – Hayes House, Hayes Road, Sully – retrospective application for cat housing building and two stores with change of use to mix of residential and emergency cat shelter.

Evan Williams – Aberogwrn Farm, Llanfarcraig – proposed staff accommodation (with rear extension).

Evan Williams – Aberogwrn Farm, Llanfarcraig – proposed second hay/storage feed barn.

Mr Kirsty Bratchley – 1 Sandy Lane, Ystradowen – single storey extension to rear, first floor extension to side.

Mr Matthew Donnelly – land at the junction of Pill Street and Little Dock Street, Cogan Pill, Penarth – proposed two two-storey residential dwellings.

Mr James Mangles – Copperfields, St Mary Church – proposed double storey side extension and single storey front extension.

Mr Ross Maclean – Aberthaw Cottage, Aberthaw – retention of summerhouse to replace outbuilding.

Mr James Davies – land at Prisk Farm, Prisk – agricultural access track.

Mr John Falcon – 18 Caradoc Avenue, Barry – proposed demolition of existing rear single storey structure and construction of rear single storey extension with garage.

Mr Gavin Birt – The Chestnuts, Llysowrney – amendments to application 2009/00011/FUL to provide a kitchen extension with en-suite bedroom at first floor level and a utility extension.

Cardiff Airport – Cardiff Airport, Rhosneig – land-side extension to Cardiff Airport terminal building including re-configuration of passenger drop-off area and associated works.

Mr Edward Saunders – Greenmeadows, St Nicholas – rear single storey extension.

Mr Robert Stanger – Westridge, Porthkerry Park, Barry – conservatory.

Mr Jeff Patreane – 17 Railway Terrace, Dinas Powys – first floor extension to rear, detached garage off rear lane.

## Barry to take a big role in Sport Relief

**LOCAL residents are being urged to support a special Barry Island-based challenge for Sport Relief 2010.**

Part of a three-day Sport Relief weekend of energy, entertainment and events, the Sainsbury's Barry Island Mile will be held on Sunday, March 21, and will start from opposite the Dolphin Bar at 11am. Runners can enter at [www.sportrelief.com](http://www.sportrelief.com)

The Vale Council events officer Sarah Jones said: "Everyone is invited to take part – from teeny-tots with their mums and dads to super sprinters up against the clock. There's something for everyone on the big day, and you can do one,

three or six miles."

Hundreds of thousands of people across the country are expected to rise to the challenge at the Sainsbury's Sport Relief Mile – and have a great time too.

Money raised through sponsorship will help poor and vulnerable people both in the UK and across the world's poorest countries.

Since its launch in 2002, more than 1.25 million people have taken part in Sport Relief, helping to raise over £75 million. Sainsbury's has supported Comic Relief since 1999, and has raised more than £43 million to date.

For further information on the Barry Island event, contact 01446 704737.

## Porthcawl under-11s seal Bryncoch victory with four-try burst

**AFTER a series of poor performances, Porthcawl under-11s travelled to Bryncoch determined to regain their early season form.**

With a punishing pre-match warm up, and final words of wisdom from their coaches ringing in their ears, the Porthcawl players started the match in impressive fashion.

Straight from the kick-off they were on the attack.

A darting run by centre Brad Griffiths, and quick ruck ball from the breakdown allowed scrum-half Tom Cogbill to feed Will Lampard, who was hauled down inches

**PORTHCAWL under-11s 28  
BRYNCOCH under-11s 7**

short of the line.

This move set a pattern of play that was to last throughout the first half.

Porthcawl's well-drilled pack were now gaining the upper hand over their larger but less mobile opponents. This allowed their backs to attack from all areas of the pitch.

From one such attack, outside-half Jack Richards left the Bryncoch defence grasping at thin air as he weaved his way through to score from well inside his own half.

Not to be outdone, the Porthcawl forwards now got in on the act with Ben Jones, Will Lampard and Rhys Copley breaking the gain line at will to release Leon Evans and Joe Williams to score well-deserved tries.

With the Porthcawl team now in total ascendancy, a further score before half-time was inevitable.

This time a strike against the head

allowed Jack Richards to dance over from halfway, rounding off a superb first half performance.

The second half was a complete contrast to the first. With the pitch deteriorating, Bryncoch's heavy-weight approach saw them claw their way back into contention.

An early try by Bryncoch had the Porthcawl supporters fearing the worst.

They need not have worried.

The entire Porthcawl team turned in a fantastic second half defensive display with James Thomas and Ben Jones continually to the fore.

In fact, as the half ended, only superb defence by Bryncoch denied Porthcawl further tries.

Firstly Ioan Black and then Tom Cogbill were held up inches short of the line.

Joe Williams again converted all four tries and Will Lampard was named man-of-the-match. AC

## White Dove Skoda offers drivers a free winter health check

**SUB-ZERO temperatures can seriously damage cars and, after a period of treacherous driving conditions, many vehicles will be feeling the strain.**

When temperatures drop, a car's battery can begin to fail, wiper blades can rip as they stick to the windscreen and tyre wear can accelerate after skidding on icy tarmac. To help its customers remain safe on the roads this winter, White Dove Skoda is offering free car health checks and advice.

Alison Williams, service manager at White Dove Skoda, explains: "At White Dove Skoda, we are renowned for great customer service and are happy to offer our knowledge and expertise to any Skoda driver

who is concerned about the condition of their car.

"We will undertake all the checks within around 20 minutes and it could help prevent drivers being stuck on the side of the road for hours this winter, or worse, involved in an accident."

The free health check

includes the inspection of the battery, coolant levels, windscreen wipers and tyres.

For further information or to arrange a free car health check, Skoda customers should contact White Dove Skoda on 02920 642 999, [www.whitedovegroup.co.uk](http://www.whitedovegroup.co.uk) Hadfield Road, Cardiff CF11 8WD

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### FordNew Ka Studio 1.2 8v Duratec (69PS)

On The Road Price**	£6,295.00
24 Monthly Payments	£101.91
Deposit Allowance***	£450.00
Customer Deposit	£nil
Total Deposit	£450.00
Amount of Credit	£5,845.00
Total Charge for Credit (inc. £10 Purchase fee*)	£476.84
Total Amount Payable by the Customer	£6,718.84
GMFV (Optional Final Payment)	£3,876.00
Mileage per Annum	12000
Excess Mileage Charge	6p per mile

\*\*Includes £2,000 Ford/Government Scrappage Allowance and £1000 customer saving

Typical 4.9% APR  
Freepost Ford Credit

\*\*\*Subject to finance. Deposit Allowance paid by Ford Motor Company when financed on typical 4.9% APR through Ford Credit.



### FordNew Fiesta Edge 1.25 Petrol (60PS)

On The Road Price**	£8,395.00
24 Monthly Payments	£146.10
Deposit Allowance***	£450.00
Customer Deposit	£nil
Total Deposit	£450.00
Amount of Credit	£7,945.00
Total Charge for Credit (inc. £10 Purchase fee*)	£631.52
Total Amount Payable by the Customer	£8,846.52
GMFV (Optional Final Payment)	£5,027.00
Mileage per Annum	12000
Excess Mileage Charge	6p per mile

\*\*Includes £2,000 Ford/Government Scrappage Allowance and £2,200.00 customer saving

Typical 4.9% APR  
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### FordNew Fiesta Zetec 1.25 16v Duratec (82PS)

On The Road Price**	£10,195.00
24 Monthly Payments	£207.47
Deposit Allowance***	£450.00
Customer Deposit	£nil
Total Deposit	£450.00
Amount of Credit	£9,745.00
Total Charge for Credit (inc. £10 Purchase fee*)	£699.52
Total Amount Payable by the Customer	£9,454.52
GMFV (Optional Final Payment)	£5,515.00
Mileage per Annum	12000
Excess Mileage Charge	6p per mile

\*\*Includes £2,000 Ford/Government Scrappage Allowance and £2,250 customer saving

Typical 4.9% APR  
Freepost Ford Credit

\*\*\*Subject to finance. Deposit Allowance paid by Ford Motor Company when financed on typical 4.9% APR through Ford Credit.



### FordFocus Zetec 1.6 16v Petrol (100PS) Euro Stage IV

On The Road Price**	£12,295.00
24 Monthly Payments	£250.81
Deposit Allowance***	£1,500.00
Customer Deposit	£nil
Total Deposit	£1,500.00
Amount of Credit	£10,795.00
Total Charge for Credit (inc. £10 Purchase fee*)	£804.44
Total Amount Payable by the Customer	£11,599.44
GMFV (Optional Final Payment)	£5,580.00
Mileage per Annum	12000
Excess Mileage Charge	6p per mile

\*\*Includes £2,000 Ford/Government Scrappage Allowance and £3,950.00 customer saving

Typical 4.9% APR  
Freepost Ford Credit

\*\*\*Subject to finance. Deposit Allowance paid by Ford Motor Company when financed on typical 4.9% APR through Ford Credit.

### FordNew Ka Style + 1.2 8v Duratec (69PS)

On The Road Price**	£7,295.00
24 Monthly Payments	£130.17
Deposit Allowance***	£450.00
Customer Deposit	£nil
Total Deposit	£450.00
Amount of Credit	£6,845.00
Total Charge for Credit (inc. £10 Purchase fee*)	£545.08
Total Amount Payable by the Customer	£7,400.08
GMFV (Optional Final Payment)	£4,266.00
Mileage per Annum	12000
Excess Mileage Charge	6p per mile

\*\*Includes £2,000 Ford/Government Scrappage Allowance and £1,200.00 customer saving

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Freepost Ford Credit

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### FordMondeo Zetec 5 door 2.0 Diesel TDCi 6sp

On The Road Price**	£15,995.00
24 Monthly Payments	£371.23
Deposit Allowance***	£1,000.00
Customer Deposit	£nil
Total Deposit	£1,000.00
Amount of Credit	£14,995.00
Total Charge for Credit (inc. £10 Purchase fee*)	£1,089.52
Total Amount Payable by the Customer	£16,094.52
GMFV (Optional Final Payment)	£7,175.00
Mileage per Annum	12000
Excess Mileage Charge	6p per mile

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185/70R13 Bridgestone B150	£46.34	£87	£165
175/70R14 Bridgestone B150	£59.20	£112	£210
175/70R14 Bridgestone B150	£48.80	£89	£170

**PERFORMANCE TYRES**

TYRE	Buy 1	Buy 2	Buy 4
185/50R14 Bridgestone B150	£53.14	£99	£190
185/50R14 Bridgestone B150	£65.24	£120	£230
185/50R15 Bridgestone B150	£69.95	£132	£255
195/50R15 Bridgestone B150	£77.20	£108	£205

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TYRE	Buy 1	Buy 2	Buy 4
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195/50R15 Bridgestone B150	£72.24	£135	£260
195/50R15 Bridgestone B150	£80.12	£110	£210
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56 Astra 1.8 VVTi Design 5dr AUTO, Silver, 18,000 miles **£7495**

57 Astra 1.9 CDTi 150 Sport Hatch SRI in Blue **£10995**

57 Astra 1.6 Twin-Top Sport in Sapphire Black, 22,000 miles **£10495**

08 Astra 1600 SXi 5dr in Star Silver, 24,000 miles **£9895**

08 Astra 1.4 16v 3dr Sport Hatch, Silver Lightning, 28,000 miles **£9795**

08 Astra 1.6 Twin-Top Sport in Pannacotta, 14,000 miles **£11495**

58 Astra 1600 Elite 5dr in Silver Lightning, 24,000 miles **£10695**

58 Astra 1600 Design 5dr in Silver Lightning, 28,000 miles **£9895**

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**CORSA**

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35 Corsa 1.0 Life 3dr in Star Silver, 50,000 miles **£4495**

35 Corsa 1.2 Design 5dr in Ultra Blue, 27,000 miles **£5495**

08 Corsa 1.3 CDTi Club 5dr in Star Silver, 21,000 miles **£7395**

08 Corsa 1.2 Life 5dr AC in Star Silver, 9,000 miles **£7995**

08 Corsa 1.2 SXi 5dr in Star Silver, 14,000 miles **£8295**

08 Corsa 1.4 SXi 3dr AUTO in Metro Blue, 9,000 miles **£8995**

08 Corsa 1.3 CDTi SXi AC 90 5dr in Silver Lightning, 23,000 miles **£7995**

08 Corsa Club 1.2 5dr, in Silver Lightning, 15,900 miles **£7695**

08 Corsa Design 5dr **from £7995**

08 Corsa 1.4 Club 5dr in Silver Lightning, 10,000 miles **£8295**

08 Corsa 1.2 Life A/C 5dr, Under 6,000 miles **Choice from £7495**

08 Corsa 1.2 Design 5dr Choice **from £8495**

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02 02 DAEWOO Matiz 0.8 SE 5-dr. In super red with grey interior, CD, immobiliser, body coloured bumpers, driver and passenger airbags, only 30,288 miles.....£2,495



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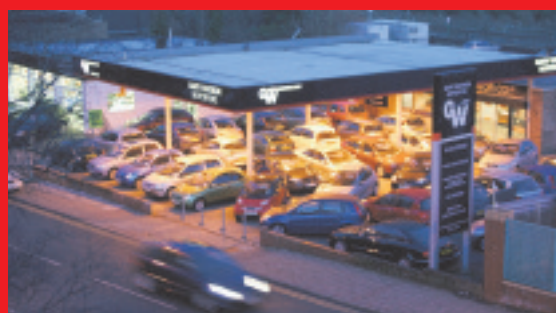
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# GEM sport

## Bridgend Athletic secure a notable double first in 2010

**BRIDGEND Athletic achieved a double first for the club in the space of four days.**

Following their first-ever win against Maesteg by 17-6 in a mid-week friendly, they recorded their first-ever away victory at Cwmllynfell in Division One of the Swalec League.

By winning 33-10, they recorded a seasonal double over the west Wales outfit, and secured a winning bonus point as they tried for five tries. They also moved to sixth position in the table.

The Athletic, playing up the slope in the first half, made an excellent start. A pin-point penalty from halfway by full-back Stuart Morris secured a line out five metres from the home team's try line.

Sean Williams caught cleanly and the Athletic forwards made a number of surges towards the Cwmllynfell line. Prop Carle Gregory was stopped inches short – but hooker Simon Mustoe was not to be denied as he burrowed over for the opening try after just five minutes.

From a scrum 40 metres out, scrum-half Aled Thomas fed outside-half Stephen Lewis. The outside-half made an excellent break and drew the full-back before releasing centre Robert Coles to cross under the posts. Stuart Morris converted.

A penalty from outside-half Peter Thomas reduced the deficit to 12-3 for the home side.

The Athletic back division were looking

by **ADRIAN BURT**

dangerous. Centre Hywel Davies was proving a handful for the Cwmllynfell team.

Following a series of forward drives just inside the Cwmllynfell half, the ball was released to the backs. Full-back Stuart Morris entered the line and broke the first line of defence. When he was halted, Coles was on hand to pick up a loose ball and run in for his second try. Morris converted to increase the Athletic lead to 19-3.

Cwmllynfell responded with a period of pressure inside the Athletic 22. Captain and No 8 Jim Morgan picked up from a five-metre scrum and forced his way over. Thomas converted to bring the home side back into the game.

With the last move of the half, lock Sean Williams picked up the ball from a ruck and ran straight for 25 metres before a well-timed pass put wing Johnny Nation in under the posts.

Morris converted the bonus point to give his side a surprise 26-3 interval lead.

As expected, the home side came back at the Athletic in the second half. The Parc y Bryn pitch, one of the highest in Wales in the Black Mountains, had been under a foot of snow recently, and had cut up badly in the first half. It was also very boggy and stamina sapping.

Now the Athletic benefited fitness-wise from their sessions on

**Swalec League Div 1 West CWMMLYNFELL BRIDGEND ATHLETIC 10 33**

similar heavy conditions on the sands of Coney Beach.

The Athletic were dominating the set pieces. Nineteen-year-old prop Matthew Norman earned many plaudits at his father's former club. Sean Williams was dominating the line outs. Fellow lock Jamie Doherty was an effective ball carrier, while the entire back row of Tom Morgan, Tom Penry-Ellis and Matthew Hillman were awesome in defence and attack.

Last season's youth team scrum-half Aled Thomas benefited from the forward's efforts, turning in a man-of-the-match performance in setting the back line in motion.

Wings Lyndsey McCausland and Johnny Nation were putting in some excellent tackles and dealing with high balls. Stuart Morris put in a faultless rock-like performance at full-back. This prevented Cwmllynfell turning possession into points.

It wasn't until the last 10 minutes that the Athletic added to their try tally. Outside-half Stephen Lewis made his third interception of the match. The first two should have resulted in tries, but this time he pinned back his ears to run in from half way. Morris converted to record the historic victory at Parc y Bryn.

The Athletic used all five replacements,

Stuart Nation, Michael Hathaway, Rhodri Davies, Rod Jones and Dan Apsee in the second period.

On January 29, the Athletic host Bwlth Wells. The Bulls have recently hit a spell of good league form with two wins and a draw last Saturday at home to leaders Whitland. One of the wins was at the Ravens' ground, while the Athletic only recorded a one-point win at Bwlth earlier in the season.

The Athletic will be looking to build on their win at Cwmllynfell, and challenge for a finish in the top half of the league.

In midweek, the Athletic showed excellent team spirit to turn a 16-9 deficit at the Old Parish into a historic 17-16 win against Maesteg.

Lock Sean Williams and hooker Stuart Nation crossed for Athletic tries, with outside-half Stuart Morris weighing in with a conversion and penalty.

## The tragic end of Welsh 'wonder horse' which took part in controversial race

**I**N almost 50 years of covering the Welsh point-to-point scene, I have seen many controversial races, but none more so than the three-horse men's open race at the Gelligaer Farmers meeting back in May 1993 – my report of the race even ended up on the front page of

**ON AND OFF THE TURF with Brian Lee**

the now sadly defunct *The Sporting Life*, and for a point-to-point to make the front page of that esteemed publication was very rare indeed!

Welsh riders Robert Rowsell, riding *Alf Mahaba*, and Tim Jones aboard *Zephyr Nights*, were greeted with boos and catcalls after finishing second and third respectively in a sensational race that is still argued about today.

But the rider of the winner, Somerset's Ron Treloggen, who rode Welsh wonder horse *Brunico*, received loud cheers.

When the starter sent the three horses on their way, Rowsell and Jones made no attempt to make a race of it, knowing that the quirky *Brunico* had to be held up for a late run.

The grey *Brunico*, finding himself in front, at first refused to jump the second fence, but

when he did and caught up with the other two horses, they slowed down again.

*Brunico* led at the seventh fence, only to refuse again, as did the other two horses and when all three managed to negotiate the obstacle, they continued at a pace that could only be described as a hack canter or slow bicycle race!

*Brunico* eventually came to the last fence ahead of *Alf Mahaba* and although strongly challenged, Treloggen teasingly did just enough to score by a length, clocking nine minutes and 36 seconds – a very, very slow time for a three-mile point-to-point.

On entering the winner's enclosure, Treloggen and *Brunico* were given a tremendous welcome. However, all three riders found themselves up before the stewards and their conduct was reported to the Jockey Club but they, in their wisdom, deemed that: "The running and

riding of *Alf Mahaba* and *Zephyr Nights* did not warrant the holding of an inquiry either under the regulation relating to horses running on their merits, or the rule relating to the proper conduct and good reputation of racing."

All three riders received letters informing them that the Stewards of the Jockey Club, having heard the evidence and viewed a video of the race, were of the opinion that there was insufficient evidence under the regulations for the matter to be referred to the disciplinary committee.

*Brunico*, a winner of The Daily Telegraph Trophy in 1992 when chalking-up 12 consecutive races, won a further 11 races in 1993 and was the first horse in 20 years to win the classic Dudley Cup at the Worcestershire meeting two years in succession.

He ended his days in a sad and mysterious way, being found by his trainer Peter Bowen in a field with severe injuries to his head and forelegs and had to be put down.

## Tae Kwon Do school's championship success

**A BRIDGEND and Vale-based Tae Kwon Do school recently competed in the British championships in Cardiff.**

The results of the schools run by Steve and Pat Tottle were:

Bridgend: Joseph Alzetta (bronze, red belt, sparring); Liz Gordon (bronze, blue belt, sparring); Ben Groves (silver, yellow belt, sparring); Emma Nelson (bronze, blue belt, sparring); Jamine Over (silver, black belt, sparring); Steven Sawday (gold, green belt, sparring); Kristian Williams (bronze, yellow belt, sparring); Cierion Worgan (silver, red belt, sparring); Rhys Worgan (gold, red belt, cadet sparring).

Vale: Ben Barker (gold, yellow belt, sparring); Jessica Burt (bronze, yellow belt, sparring); Bethany Burt (bronze, blue belt, sparring); Rhianon Williams (bronze, black belt, sparring); Catrin Williams (bronze, blue belt, sparring).

Instructor Steve Tottle was extremely pleased with these results at such a large and prestigious tournament.

## Rugby used to be so much simpler!

**I**USUALLY look forward in anticipation to the Six Nations, but this year I fear that we will not be entertained as much as in previous years.

A typical game now seems to be one of aerial ping-pong interspersed with endless penalties given by over-officious referees.

In many cases, the winner is decided by the referee awarding a dubious penalty in the last few minutes.

It used to be true that to score points a team needed to be in possession of the ball. No longer! A team can win on penalties alone, with-

out recourse to scoring a try. Maybe the rules could be tweaked to encourage real flowing rugby.

I suggest that penalties should only score one point and kicks at the post should only be allowed inside the 22-metre area.

To speed up the game and get away from endless 'phases', rucks should be limited to say three before the game must be opened out.

As for referees, why not adopt a universal advantage rule, instead of leaving the interpretation to individual referees?

Rugby used to be a simple game! Ceri Harris, Llantrisant

## Athletic Seconds lose out in close encounter

**LLANHARAN gained revenge against the Athletic for their defeat earlier in the season in this return Bridgend District Division One encounter.**

The Athletic exerted the early pressure and went into the lead with a penalty by No 10 Tom Cole.

The lead was quickly cancelled out by a Llanharan penalty, followed by a brilliant solo try by the Llanharan out-

**LLANHARAN 2nds BRIDGEND ATHLETIC 23 15**

side-half. Llanharan were now in control of the game.

A quick tap penalty taken by Tom Cole caught everyone by surprise, resulting in a scoring pass to full-back Chris Thomas to keep the Athletic in the game.

Llanharan kept up the pressure and this, combined with some poor first up tackling, resulted in Llanharan leading by 20-8 at half-time.

The Athletic gained momentum in the second half, but could not break a resolute Llanharan defence. With 10 minutes to go, the Athletic pack drove up field for lock Callum McCloud to crash over. Carle Ellis converted to reduce the lead to five points.

However, a late penalty by substitute outside-half Wayne Jarvis sealed a Llanharan victory.

RH

## CALLING ALL CLUB OFFICIALS!

The GEM welcomes your match reports, and other club items of interest. Email them to: [ggem@internet-today.co.uk](mailto:ggem@internet-today.co.uk) or post to the Editorial Department, The GEM, Graig House, 53 Eastgate, Cowbridge CF71 7EL

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